

LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

DECEMBER, 1893.

SERGEANT CRÆSUS.

I.

THE colonel was hopping mad. Anybody could see it, and everybody within range of his tongue and temper felt it. Bob Gray, the adjutant, guessed it before he got within sound of his voice, and could swear to it before he got out again. Being only an adjutant, however, he couldn't swear at it, and so keep on even terms with his chief. He bottled his own wrath, as he did the colonel's commentaries, and kept them both for future emergencies. A relic of the ~~vaunted~~ old dragoon days was the colonel; one of the fast vanishing lot of hard-riding, hard-fighting, and sometimes hard-swearing campaigners who had learned their trade under masters of the art long years before the war. He had crossed the Llano Estacado and camped on the Mimbres and chased the Navajoes when Navajoes were monarchs of the Southwestern plains, were bellicose not bucolic, raised sheol instead of sheep,—statement otherwise expressed by Kit Carson, a keen scout and keener judge of aboriginal nature, who said that when they were not raising hell or ha'r in equal proportions the Navajoes were either dead or asleep. We were having campaigns ten times more thrilling in point of incident, ten times fiercer in point of fighting and casualties, ten times tougher in point of hardship and privation—and the food we lived on—than those of the Navajo days, to be sure, but the colonel would have it the service wasn't to be mentioned alongside that to which he had been accustomed when they scouted with Kearney or Fauntleroy and rode races with the Mounted Rifles at Albuquerque and Santa Fé. "They made cavalymen in those days," said he. Then with gloomy reference to the losses of the summer just gone by, "Now they only kill 'em, and this set of slummers they are sending out to recruit us is only fit to be killed anyhow. Why the devil did you send me such a wooden-headed idiot for an orderly on this day of all others?" he demanded of his staff officer. "Why, he couldn't speak English!"

Now, when the colonel began to ask questions and invite explanations we all knew that he had, measurably at least, blown off his wrath; was beginning to regret anything sharp he had said; was penitent, and wanted to be mollified and forgiven and taken into good-fellowship again. Nobody knew this better than the adjutant, or presumed on it more. At this stage of the proceedings Bob became downright impudent. But his brown eyes twinkled with fun as he stood facing the colonel and waiting for an opportunity to speak.

"No, sir, he couldn't speak a word of English," repeated the colonel.

"We-ell," said Bob, reflectively, "it wasn't a civil service examination I was running. He was the cleanest man on guard, and your orders are——"

"Then send me the dirtiest so long as we are in the field," burst in the colonel, impetuously. "What I want in an orderly is just what I don't want in an adjutant,—a man who can repeat what I say, and not think."

"Well, anybody ought to be able to do that, sir," began the adjutant, with a twitch under the heavy thatch of his moustache.

"Wait till I get through, young man," interrupted the colonel again, impressively; "then you may be as harmless as you know how. What I need in an adjutant is one who can think and not say anything—except when I tell him to. Now, you sent me a Dutch doll that couldn't even squawk in English. He called me names in some foreign lingo."

"Well, you wouldn't want him to do it in English, would you, colonel?"

"Wouldn't? I didn't—Damn it! where are your wits this morning, Gray? He—he—what was it he called me, Fallon?"

"Sounded like O-burst, was all I heard, sir," said the quartermaster, uncomfortably. "But Sergeant Stein says that's only the double Dutch for colonel."

Mr. Gray's eyes were dancing now. "I never saw the man before in my life, colonel," said he. "He came with that big batch of recruits the other day. Manning's first sergeant marched him on. He looked spick-span neat and clean and intelligent,—by long odds the trimmest and most soldier-like fellow on guard."

"Not excepting the officer of the day and adjutant, I suppose," interposed the colonel.

"No exceptions whatever, sir. Indeed, not excepting any man in the whole command, from the colonel up—I mean down. You were saying yesterday that the only way to tell real cavalymen from recruits was that we looked like jayhawkers and they like Jew-store dummies. Still, I thought the sight of a man clean shaved, with buttons and buckles polished, would please your eyes after all this campaign's mud, so I sent him. Of course if he could only call you names in Dutch I'm sorry, and will see that you're properly looked after next time."

But even "Old Tintop" began to see the fun under the sedate gravity of the adjutant's words.

"Confound you for a young rascal! What have you been making

me say, anyhow? Come back here, Fallon, and stop your laughing, too, sir. You're a nice pair to play it on your old—— What do you want, sir?"

Turning suddenly, he addressed a ragged, tattered, hungry-looking party in hunting-shirt, buckskin breeches, and Shoshone leggings, standing attention before the colonel's "shack,"—he had no tent,—with a bare brown hand raised to his rusty brown carbine in salute.

"I'm ordered to report to the colonel as the dirtiest man on guard, sir," was the stolid answer.

For a moment the commander gazed at him in wrath, and then a light flashed across his mental vision.

"Now see what you've reduced me to, Gray, you infernal young sinner. I sent Stein back with the orderly you picked out, and here's the result."

"Well, sir, if dirt's what you want, this——"

"But it isn't," interrupted the colonel. "I want an orderly, and not a scarecrow. Now you see, do you?"

"I think I do, sir. Neither a rag doll nor a Dutch doll, neither the cleanest nor the dirtiest, just a happy medium, one who can call names in English preferred, not so swell as to put our head-quarters to shame, nor so shabby as to make us blush for all—— Well, I think I understand you."

But here the colonel interposed with language so forcible as to put a stop even to Gray's fun, which he would stand, as a rule, longer than anybody else's. Meantime, the discovery having been made that recruit Schramm was but a novice in English, whatsoever he might be in German, that young soldier was told by the sergeant of the guard to "Go on out of this and back to your bunkies. Sure you couldn't tell a Sioux from a shyster unless he shot you in Dutch," which, being interpreted, was understood to mean that until he had mastered the English language he wasn't fit for sentry duty. And so, much troubled, the young fellow went to Sergeant Schultz, a Prussian like himself, and sorrowfully told his tale.

Never in his life had Private Schramm's blue eyes gazed on scenes and soldiers such as these. Just what he expected to find in the ranks of the American army he had revealed as yet to no one. It was the eventful summer of '76, when, amazed at the force and fury with which the Sioux had fought and baffled the commands of Crook and Custer, Terry and Gibbon, Congress authorized the immediate enlistment of twenty-five hundred men to fill the gaps in the four regiments of cavalry engaged in the campaign. No credentials were required. Eager for a chance to get to the new diggings—the Black Hills of Dakota—at the expense of Uncle Sam, swarms of toughs were enlisted in the slums of New York and Philadelphia and Baltimore, and four weeks later were deserting by the dozen, with horse and equipment complete, as they reached the wasted army in the field. But there was leaven in the lump. "That young feller's a soldier clean through," said the recruiting sergeant when Schramm gave his name, age, nationality, etc., answering promptly so long as the questions were propounded in the German tongue.

"Can't he speak English at all?" said the recruiting officer, doubtfully. "Well, what's the odds, after all, so long as he's only going to be scalped? Swear him in." And so, silent, observant, patient, Schramm was shipped westward with the first lot of victims, turned over to the waiting officers at the cavalry dépôt, was marched out to camp and set to work grooming a horse the very evening of his arrival, and turned out for drill the next morning, when, barring a certain quaint habit of throwing the left foot far out to the front at the command "march," and a queer way of executing "about face," it was found that he was far better drilled in the rudiments, at least, than the corporal detailed as his instructor. The carbine manual was strange to him, but not so the sabre. He handled it like a master. He knew how to clean and polish arms, belt buckles, etc., in a way that the few old hands at the post recognized at once as "expert." He was besieged by German sergeants with queries as to his past history, but said he preferred to keep all that to himself. Yes, he had served. No use in denying that. He had been through certain cadet schools and entered a certain regiment of Hussars; which one he wouldn't say, neither could they find out by writing. It was nobody's business but his own, anyhow, said he. The United States had adopted him, and he was now an Amerikaner, a "Freiwilliger," too. Long before the weary march to the hills was over he had demonstrated the fact that he was a fine horseman and a good shot. Lieutenant Ray, commander of the big detachment, had more than once spoken of it; and so, when finally they reached the wild romantic hills and were distributed among the regiments there awaiting them, Schramm looked with wonderment in his soul, if not in his eyes, at the slouch-hatted, rough-shirted, unshaven officers, at the ragged mob of the rank and file, at their gaunt skeletons of horses, and marvelled that his strange fortunes had made him a soldier in so strange a service.

Wisely he kept his views to himself, making no comment even to the Germans who were disposed to be sociable and to question him as to his antecedents. In two days a strong column marched away,—all broken-down men and horses and all raw recruits being left behind,—but with Schramm, evidently an educated cavalryman, riding buoyantly in the ranks of D Troop on the spirited roan he had bestriden all the way from the railway. "Whatever they look," thought he, "these fellows are mightily at home on the frontier." Sergeant Schultz explained that they always left their uniforms in garrison when in the field after Indians, but called his attention to the fact that they never lived better in the old country than these rough-looking fellows were living now. Already the ills of the summer were forgotten.

Whether he forgot or not, Schramm made no reply. He was well content with his rations, for field appetite is a wondrous sauce, and soldier coffee with bacon, beans, "Dutch oven" bread, and antelope steak have a relish in the keen October air known only to the frontiersman. Schramm, from looking pale, peaked, and a trifle pathetic when he stepped from the crowded train at the railway, had sprouted a fuzzy beard, blistered the skin of his cheeks and nose in the hot noonday sunshine, seared his eyelids by intemperate ablutions in alkali water,

and was making commendable progress in plains-craft and plains-English. In three weeks' scouting down the South Cheyenne, with the Bad Lands on the right and worse lands on the left, he became so proficient in the cavalry art of pre-empting a good patch of grass for his horse that his troop commander, closely watching his new recruit, remarked that that young fellow would be a valuable non-commissioned officer some day, if he hadn't been already. Like the Germans of his heterogeneous troop, the captain was of the opinion that Schramm had a history.

One evening, far down the valley where not an Indian had been seen or heard of, the outlying sentries reported a bunch of black-tailed deer in the foot-hills to the northwest. Lieutenant Morgan was in command of the guard, and his captain was officer of the day. Morgan took a squad of three or four men, mounted, and rode away down the wind, while a party of officers scrambled up the bank to the edge of the broad prairie to watch the sport. It was just then that Schramm, his blue eyes ablaze, clicked his heels together, stood bolt upright, and began, coloring even redder in combined eagerness and embarrassment, "Bitte, Herr Rittmeister," then, desperately plunging into trooper's English as he had heard it spoken, "Kin I go along mit dem fellers alretty?" and as Manning nodded assent, he saluted with marked precision, bored a hole with his heel in the alkali dust in punctilious execution of the "*kehrt*," sprang bareback on his horse, and rode away, carbine in hand, after his trooper comrades. Half an hour went by, and the herd, still undisturbed, continued to graze. The hunters were out of sight among the depressions of the surface. The captain sent for his field-glass, and other officers joined him and levelled their binoculars on the distant quarry,—just a deer family having a quiet dinner together in a sheltered ravine opening out into the broad bottom of the stream. Presently, one after another, three or four black objects crawled around a point. "Yonder's Morgan," said the watchers. Suddenly the deer family tossed high their heads, then darted away into the hills and were out of sight in an instant. Two or three of the younger officers set up a laugh of derision: "Pretty hunting that is!" But the elders looked grave. "What scared them?" was the query. The black dots of hunters had halted, evidently in surprise. There seemed to be a moment of consultation, and then all three could be seen running back in the direction in which they came.

"Going for the horses to chase the deer," laughed young Leonard, who sneered at Morgan's claims as a deer-stalker.

"Chase be hanged! Look there! the deer are chasing them."

Then uprose every man in mad excitement, for their senior lieutenant, Mr. Ray, had sprung to his feet and rushed for his horse. "Deer, you damned fool! It's Indians!" he cried; and, shouting for some of the guard to follow him, Mr. Ray threw himself upon his nimble sorrel and darted out over the prairie to the rescue. In a minute half a dozen men were stringing along after him, while the alarm sounded among the cottonwoods and the herd-guards came driving in their excited *cavalladas*.

Meantime, there was the mischief to pay. Leaving two men as

horse-holders in a little swale, Morgan with three others, including the eager young Prussian, crawled off for a shot at the herd. They were in plain view, and utterly unsuspecting of approach from that quarter, when, all on a sudden, the buck started, stamped, tossed his crest, and away they all flew up the grassy ravine. Rising to his feet to study the situation, after a word or two of caution to his comrades, Morgan was saluted by the whistle of a bullet past his head,—another,—another,—and each coupled with the sharp report of the rifle.

"Back to your horses, quick!" he shouted.

All four ran, only to catch sight of a party of Sioux lashing straight down the slope to head them off, while others, firing rapidly, gave chase from across the ravine to their rear. Before he had gone twenty yards Morgan saw Schramm stumble and fall, face downward.

"What is it?" he cried, running and bending over him. "Are you hit? Here, let me help you, man." And poor Schramm could only clasp his hand about his leg and plead in English equally broken, "Lauf!—Roon! Herr Lieutenant. Ach Gott! I can it not make." Then Morgan, big powerful fellow, cut him short and swung the little ex-hussar on his back and plunged ahead, heedless of his captive's splutter and struggles. But yelling Sioux and whistling bullets both were gaining. Another minute, and down went lieutenant and man, carrier and carried, and this time Schramm, rolling over and over, never let go of his carbine, but, lying prone, levelled it over a little hummock, and sent a shot square at the foremost Indian, tripping his calico pony in the nick of time. Morgan echoed with another. "Good boy, Schramm! Give 'em some more," he cried, as the charging warriors veered and opened out. Then came other shots from the swale in rear. Only one man held the horses now; the others—the whole squad—were blazing away.

"Check to your game, my bucks!" panicked Morgan, loading, firing, and missing again. "It's little but lead you'll get out of this outfit." The Indian bullets were biting at the turf all around him, yet mercifully flying wild. Schramm, bleeding fast, was paling, yet keeping up his fire, wondering how it was he could so rarely hit those yelling, painted, feathered fiends darting about them only a few hundred yards away. Then, rising on his knees, he shouted Prussian taunt and challenge.

"Lie down, you fool!" yelled his officer, rolling over to him, and, seizing his shoulder, Morgan forced him to earth. Not a second too soon: an Indian had sprung from his pony, taken deliberate aim, and sent a shot that just grazed the hand that pinned him down; and then came thunder of hoofs far out over the prairie, and the rush of comrades to the rescue, and then the Sioux, firing to the last minute, whirled away up the ravine, and Morgan's deer-hunt was over. That night, while Ray, with his troop, was still out in pursuit, Morgan lay with a shot-hole through the left shoulder at the bivouac fire, and was chaffed and condoled with in moderation over the failure of his venison-chase, and took it all meekly enough. He had bagged no game, had well-nigh lost his own and other lives, had ridden almost blindly into Indian ambuscade, and yet, in point of result, as it turned out, that was about the best day's work he had done in all his life.

II.

"If ever a man came into the cavalry who deserved well of his country," said his colonel, "it is Morgan." He was a good soldier, but a bad manager,—a combination far more frequent than is probably known. He came into the regiment in '66, burdened with a wife and a war debt. A capital trooper, he had won honors with the sabre in the Shenandoah; had risen to the command of his battalion, and was urged to take a commission in the regular army. Famous names backed his application, but he had been held to duty in Texas while earlier-discharged volunteers were picking up the plums in the newly-authorized regiments. He got in eventually as second lieutenant where his own lieutenants had gone in as first. He had the brevet of a lieutenant-colonel of volunteers and the rank and pay of a low-down subaltern of regulars when he and his wife and a little daughter joined the regiment in the South. When he came to the frontier after five years of reconstruction duty, her health was impaired as much as his prospects. Morgan was supporting an invalid wife, three children, a negro "mammy," an egregious folly of a female nurse, and a scattered indebtedness of no one knew just how many hundreds or thousands, all on a first lieutenant's pay, and that hypothecated. He loved his wife and little ones; he was attached to his comrades and his profession; but every month found him more dangerously involved. He had no relatives to help him; she had some who might, but didn't. He wore old clothes, stinted himself in every way, yet saw no light ahead, and, to make a long story short, would have thanked God for the chance to end it all, but for the thought of those helpless little ones, when at last the wife, not he, was taken. She had been practically bedridden for two years, and it would have been mercy to take her long before, but Morgan couldn't see that. He wept sorely over the cold, emaciated form, then roused himself, gathered his children in his strong arms and folded them to his heart. "You must be more than ever 'little mother' to them now, Connie," said he, as he kissed the white forehead of his eldest. She was only fifteen that spring, yet for two years had been more woman than child, trying to help mother, trying to be a comfort to "poor daddy," whose face took on deep and deeper lines with every month, trying to be a teacher and playmate and mother all in one to sister Lottie, only eight, and to burly, brown-haired, uproarious little Billy, the one member of the household whose spirits were unquenchable. There were ministering hands and loving hearts at the rude old frontier fort, and in poor Mrs. Morgan's last days, far from her home and kindred, there was no "lack of woman's nursing," no "dearth of woman's tears." Everybody seemed to go in the solemn little procession when, afoot, they followed the wasted form to its bleak and lonely resting-place in the post cemetery out on the open prairie.

"My God! to think of poor Carrie's having to be buried in such a dreary waste as this!" moaned the widower that evening as some of his comrades strove to comfort him. He had written to her relatives—she had brothers and a sister married and well-to-do—telling of the

inevitable end so soon to come, intimating that she longed to be taken home and to lie by her mother's side in the shaded church-yard, but that he actually had not a cent. The brothers were very sorry. Both in their younger days had freely borrowed the captain's tens and twenties and lived high with sister Cad, to whom the big-hearted dragoon sent each month four-fifths of his pay. Pretty sister Lottie, too, made her home with Caroline, "who would otherwise be so lonesome," much of the four years Morgan served at the front. His pay was the main support of the family, in fact, for the boys were still attending school, and the old man's business languished as the war went on. But all this was something they rather wished to forget in the years that followed. They didn't want to grow up into actively inimical relations with their elder sister's husband, yet having so long lived on his bounty, how could they, being ordinary mortals, help learning to hate him unless they could forget the benefits of the past? Bob and Sam, of whom she so often talked, were prosperous business men now, with wives and olive-branches and vines and fig-trees of their own, and how could their wives or they be expected to want to have her, a dark shadow at the fireside, to linger, languish, and slowly die on their hands? Neither brother felt that he could stand the expense of fetching Carrie home. Each thought the other ought to do it, and both thought that Lottie should,—that is, Lottie's husband. But Lottie's husband knew not the impoverished trooper on the far frontier, nor his wife, nor his children, and Lottie was not particularly anxious that he should. Her beauty had captivated the brilliant young lawyer when professional business called him from Cleveland to Saginaw, but it took all he could command to keep up the style in which they lived now. A gay winter was coming on, and there was very little interest and less discussion among the three over the question which should succor Carrie, and so poor Morgan's humble appeal was fruitless.

It was December when she was laid away. In February a strong column was sent to break up the Sioux strongholds to the north, with the not unusual result of breaking up several households at the fort. The Sioux lost nothing they did not get back; the soldiers got back nothing they lost; in fact, many of them did not get back at all. The savage chiefs held a council to settle on the spot for the next battle, and the soldiers a court to settle on the spot the responsibility for the last, which was a failure. It was found that beyond certain serious casualties the damages were mainly at the hands of Jack Frost to the feet and fingers of the foemen, though several officers were declared to have suffered in mind, body, and estate, and others in reputation, which was odd, in view of the fact, as shown before the court, that the accused had no reputation to lose. Morgan, happily, was spared all participation in this hapless campaign, being retained at the fort because of recent bereavement and his motherless children. He was made commissary to help him out of trouble, and thereby was plunged into worse. When the command went out in midwinter he would have been glad to go and never return, but, as has been said, for those little faces at home. Another column was sent out in May, and others fol-

lowed that in June, and still Morgan was held at the fort on commissary duty until later the direful tidings flashed in over the wires that Custer and his pet troops were wiped out; then everybody had to go. Morgan strained "Little Mother" to his heart, praying God to guard and bless the babies and bring him back to them in safety. Mrs. Warren, their next-door neighbor, promised they should be the objects of her tender care. They had old Mammy with them still, but the nurse had flitted eastward months before,—one good riddance at least,—and by the end of July Morgan was serving out groceries and taking in money as field commissary. A column on frontier campaign with only the clothes it had on and with never a wagon could hardly be expected to be burdened with a safe in which to secure the commissary's funds. Uncle Sam has a simple way of reimbursing himself in the event of loss: he stops the commissary's pay until the amount is covered, and the commissary may stop the hungry mouths at home meanwhile as best he can,—that isn't Uncle Sam's business. Morgan had over seven hundred and fifty dollars in "greenbacks" in the lining of his canvas hunting-coat when they reached the Southern hills in October, and not a cent of it when they marched out on the 15th. The campaign being virtually over, all danger, hardship, work, and heavy responsibility at an end, a staff captain came by rail and stage to take over the funds and stores of the line lieutenant and charge up to him every cent's worth that had leaked or dribbled from the mule-packs, a species of charging that differed from that expected of a linesman, in that it involved none of the perils, yet promised greater reward.—You may be assured this gentleman did not come without a safe.—And Morgan, riding from the bivouac to the stage station, a mile away, the very evening of his successor's arrival, was lassoed on his horse in Cinnabar Cañon, gagged, bound, robbed of his package of greenbacks, all in the flash of a bull's-eye. Picked up, stunned, ten minutes thereafter, he could not describe his assailants, but certain hard characters with the command, some of the precious gang of recruits just arrived, made off that night with their horses, equipments, and everything. Certain civil officials gave chase. There was still hope they might be overhauled and the money captured before they could reach the mining towns. Meantime, Morgan, not severely hurt, was ordered to join his troop. It was God's mercy that only an hour before the robbery he had counted out every cent for which he was accountable in the presence of Old Tintop and his adjutant, otherwise he would have had to stagger under the accusation of having made away with the money and made up the story.

In vain the rough old campaigner had sought to cheer Morgan by assurance that the party sent out in chase couldn't help gathering in the robbers, who, with one exception, were strangers to the frontier. Morgan groaned in spirit. "No, colonel, it is useless. Luck has been dead against me ever since we furled the Wolverine guidons and I joined the regulars. That money will never be found, and I am eight hundred dollars more in debt than I was a month ago, when it was all I could stagger under. It's only worse and more of it." And here this forty-year-old fatalist turned away and buried his bearded face in his hands.

And now, a few weeks later, with a hole in his shoulder and fever in his veins, Mr. Morgan was being borne along homeward in a mule-litter, hopeless and sick at heart, totally unconscious of the fact that one man at least in the long dusty column looked up to him with an enthusiastic gratitude, even while looking down on him from the saddle. Schramm's right leg had been shot through midway between ankle and knee, but the fracture was simple, and the wounded limb was skilfully dressed, set in splints, and Schramm rode in a litter a week or two, as ordered, then his Teutonic prayers took effect on the "Herr Wundarzt," and he was allowed to swing the leg over the handsome roan his captain had promised he should have again as soon as he was able to straddle the beast and settle the question why he had named him Bredow. We had little or no time for war-history in the cavalry in those days.

Morgan could not but note how affectionately Schramm's blue eyes would beam upon him and how full of anxious sympathy were his frequent inquiries as to whether there were not something he could do for the Herr Lieutenant. They sent the two, with others, in together to the old fort on the railway, and Schramm, whose wound was the more serious, was much the sooner recovered, and bustling around as though nothing had happened, while the veteran lieutenant, whose hurt was slight, seemed unable to rally. There are wounds that sap the vital forces worse than knife or bullet. Morgan was fretting himself to death. He broke down utterly when Old Tintop, a month later, came in to see him on his arrival at the post.

"What can I do, colonel?" he moaned. "I am too old to resign and try to find employment at home. There's no room for crippled dragoons there. Yet my creditors are hounding me, my pay may be stopped any minute to settle this commissary business, and then what will become of my children?"

It was too much for Tintop. He had in his desk that moment the fatal paper received from Washington. It was all very well for the board of survey and the department commander to exonerate Lieutenant Morgan from blame, but the watch-dogs of the treasury couldn't allow him to drop that seven hundred and fifty dollars. There was no doubt that he was robbed. The robbers, in fact, deserting recruits en route to the mines, were easily overhauled by experienced frontiersmen who "lit out" in pursuit the moment the affair was heard of. It was scandalous on the part of "tenderfoot toughs" from the far East to rob an army disbursing officer—and expect to get away with the swag. Buckskin Joe, Lopsided Pete, and other local celebrities lost little time in overhauling the Bowery gang and recovering such valuables as they had; but who was to overhaul Joe and Pete? The auditor said Mr. Morgan ought to have kept that money in the safe. The department commander, striving to aid a good soldier, pointed out that they didn't carry safes when on Indian campaign; if they did, they would even less frequently catch the Indians. But it availed nothing. What did the Treasury Department care whether Indians were caught or not? Mr. Morgan was held to have violated the spirit of his instructions in that he went to Captain Stone in town to turn over the money, instead of

waiting for Captain Stone to come to him. Then the general pointed out that Morgan was ordered to march with the command at daybreak, and therefore had to turn over the money that night. But the bureau officials couldn't see it. Let Lieutenant Morgan get a bill of relief through Congress, said the pragmatic official, well knowing that such bills are the outcome of influence, not innocence. The colonel went to the office, and by way of comforting himself for the weakness which prompted him to blow his nose and wipe his eyes very often before leaving Morgan, and to kiss Connie and Lot several times after, pitched into Mr. Gray, his perennial chopping-block, and Gray, finding meekness and silence not what was needed, fired back. They exchanged volleys a minute, Gray having all the advantage of sense and the colonel of sound, and ended, as usual, by the old man saying he wouldn't give a tinker's dam for an adjutant he couldn't pitch into when he had to pitch into somebody, or that couldn't talk back. "I'm all broke up about Morgan. Can't we do something to pull him out of his hole?"

So they wrote letters, did the officers, to Morgan's wife's relatives, setting forth how brave and deserving and unfortunate he was, and that something must be done for those children. It's all well enough in the eyes of one's wife's relatives to be brave and deserving, but they have no use for a man who is unfortunate. In fact, if he is only fortunate they care very little how brave he may be, and less for his deserts. Robert answered the colonel's missive, but the others did not. Rob said they had already been put to much expense on their sister's account,—which, as they wore no mourning and published no notice in the papers at the time of her death, was an out-and-out whopper. He furthermore said if something had to be done for those children to go ahead and do it,—which was simply indecent. Tintop had a copy made and sent it to a classmate, a distinguished officer of engineers whose office was in Detroit, and whose duties made him well known in influential circles, and the colonel made inquiries and sent reports. The boys were well-to-do, in a paying business, both of them; and as for Aunt Lottie, she wasted more money in six months than would clothe, feed, and comfort her army nieces and nephew as many years. "But," said the engineer, "I fancy her husband owes very much more than Mr. Morgan, and the crash may come any day."

But what Tintop could not do through Morgan's wife's relatives he brought about in other ways. The engineer colonel knew prominent business men who were comrades of Morgan's in the old Wolverine brigade, famous at Gettysburg, Winchester, Five Forks, and Appomattox. Some had amassed wealth, many were prominent, all were sympathetic, and when they took hold it was with a vim. Meantime, however, valuable time was lost, and poor Morgan was breaking down under his load. Meantime, too, ministering angels, army wives and mothers, none so wealthy that their charity entailed no sacrifice, none so poor that it could not and did not help, moved by that boundless pity and sympathy which motherless little ones excite, were lending helping hands about the cheerless quarters and bringing grateful tears and

smiles to Connie's anxious face. Mrs. Warren, Mrs. Woods, and others had laid their matronly heads together and organized a committee of ways and means. Of course nothing could be done to excite Morgan's suspicions or wound his pride. Connie, too, was old beyond her years and shrank from what might look like dependence, but she was too young to manage household expenses. Old Mammy had none but extravagant ideas, as befitted the retainer of a good old Southern family, and the father was practically helpless. It was at this stage of the proceedings that Fagan, the veteran striker who had long been on domestic duty for the Morgans, in accordance with the system then in vogue, was taken down with acute rheumatism and went to hospital, and that Private Schramm, who for days had never missed an opportunity of inquiring for the lieutenant and occasionally lending a helping hand, came suddenly into prominence. Somebody had to be detailed as Morgan's "striker." There were always quite a number of the enlisted men who were eager to be placed on such duty, thereby earning five dollars a month, living on better rations, escaping guard duty, drills, and roll-calls, and having only to bring in wood and water, black boots, clean equipments, etc. Schramm was reserved, temperate, studious, a model young soldier, daily acquiring more thorough knowledge of military duty and of the English language as spoken by the blue-coats on the border. Two or three times the doctor, finding him hovering about the quarters, had sent him over to the hospital for medicine, or the like, and Schramm, saluting with Teutonic precision, had obeyed every order with soldierly alacrity. More than once when Fagan, groaning and coughing and wheezing in the keen wintry air, seemed unable to bear his burden of firewood into the house, Schramm had laughingly lent his aid, and one evening he came suddenly upon the tall, slender, fragile form of Connie staggering into the kitchen door, heavily laden with logs. With one spring the Prussian was at her side, the blue eyes kindling, and he who hitherto had never presumed to address the "gnädige Fräulein" except with hand at temple and heels aclick, briskly dispossessed her of her load, and bore it into the sitting-room, where Lot and Billy were squabbling over their blocks in the wintry gloaming, and Connie blushed to her temples as she thanked the stalwart young soldier, once more standing erect and brushing the bark-dust from his overcoat.

"Father sent Fagan to town," she explained, "and he should have been home an hour ago. We are so much obliged to you, Schr-r-amm." And Schr-r-amm seemed so hard a word to say that she blushed still more, hesitated, and stammered,—she who, garrison-bred, had never heard the private soldier addressed in any other way.

It was that evening, later, that old Fagan declared himself all broke up, which meant just the opposite, that he had broken down and must quit work. Mrs. Turner, a light-hearted and thoughtless young matron, was sitting with Connie at the moment.

"He'll go to hospital, won't he?" she said. "Then how much better it will be! Captain Manning will let you have Schramm." But, to Mrs. Turner's surprise, Connie promptly declared she would not have Schramm.

"Why-y, I thought he was so devoted to your father,—so nice in every way."

"Certainly," said Connie, with decision; "he is devoted to father, and he is simply altogether too nice to be put on any such duty."

"Did you ever know so strange a child?" said Mrs. Turner, telling of the conversation a little later. "She fairly put me down as though I were a chit of fifteen—like herself."

"Ye-es, instead of being old enough to be her mother," suggested a fair rival, mischievously, and Mrs. Turner bridled, but said no more.

But Manning, too, fell into error. Informed by his first sergeant at tattoo that Fagan was down sick and the lieutenant without a striker, in all kindness and desire to help he asked who would be the best man to send, and the sergeant promptly answered, "Schramm. Schramm was all the time over there, and doubtless he would be glad to take the detail." Manning hesitated a moment. He had other views for this young soldier, whose usefulness in the troop could become very great as soon as he mastered a little more English. But he called him forthwith. Schramm was among his comrades, awaiting the assembly signal, and, summoned abruptly, he stood attention in a foot of snow and answered, "Zu Befehl, Herr Rittmeister," before he could catch himself and blurt out "Ca-Capitan." His gloved hand remained, Prussian fashion, in salute.

"Schramm, I hate to lose you from the troop, but would you care to go to Lieutenant Morgan's as orderly?"

"I, Herr Rittmeister?"

The roll of the *r's* was almost like that of a drum. The blood mounted to his cheeks. He stammered, looked utterly bewildered, stumbled, and between embarrassment and sense of subordination stood meekly mute.

"Don't you want to go?" asked Manning.

"Bitte, Herr Capitan, unless I haf it to do."

"Oh, no, by no means. I supposed you'd really like it," said Manning. "I would much rather you didn't. That's all." And Schramm nearly fell over himself in the effort to salute and face about in a foot-deep drift and escape before the Herr Rittmeister might change his mind. "Whom can we send, sergeant? I want a good steady man, for Mr. Morgan is far from mending."

"Well, sir, there's Penner: he ain't good for nothing else."

And so it came to pass that Penner, a mild-mannered, moony young barbarian, went gladly to duties with which he was far more familiar than the grooming of frolicsome steeds and the tramping of lonely sentry-posts. And Schramm, redoubling the assiduity of his attention to military duties, none the less kept up his frequent visits to the Morgans' quarters, modestly presenting himself at the rear door and laboriously inquiring how the Herr Lieutenant had passed the night and whether he could do aught to serve him during the day. Penner was soon sufficiently domesticated to answer these queries himself, but not infrequently Constance came to answer the soldier's knock, and then at sight of the gnädige Fräulein Schramm's manner would become simply extravagant in precision and deference. Within the week after

he declined the place the soldiers were saying Schramm "wouldn't be dog-robber, but was bossing Penner's job all the same." And certain it was that Penner owed much of his usefulness to the suggestions of his better-informed countryman. Meantime, Mrs. Warren and Mrs. Woods were doing all that lay in their power to help about the house, and another loving woman, who devoted two hours each morning to the lessons of her own little ones, had induced Constance to send Lot and Billy to her as recruits in the kindergarten, and the officers, dropping in each evening to cheer the old man up a bit, still striving to hold from him the fact that the Treasury Department had proved deaf to all martial appeals in his behalf, were made glad one bitter evening by a despatch from the Wolverine Senator. The old Michigan brigade had still "a pull," and Tintop himself went whistling down the line to tell Morgan the glad news that he had friends at court.

"Bill of relief for Morgan will be presented," wired the magnate. "Meantime, no stoppage allowed."

"Who could have fixed this for me?" asked Morgan, gratefully, with glistening eyes.

"Oh, your friends at home did it," answered Tintop, promptly, with pardonable thought of how much stirring the friends at the front had first to do. "What they ought to stir about now is to help you out with these—these—other claims; I don't mean pay them for you, of course,—you wouldn't want them to do that,—but fix it so that you could capitalize 'em someway; raise a little fund that you could repay at so much a month with six per cent. interest, and then wipe out all these pressing things."

Poor Morgan! his first thought had been that now he could order a suitable head-stone for Carrie's lonely grave.

III.

The winter went out in storm and bluster. The spring tide set in with reluctant flow. The prairie wastes, swept clean by furious gales in March, rerobed in glistening white in April, peeped forth through ragged rents in their fleecy mantle at the soft touch of the south wind, then, lulled by the plash of warm summer shower, went to sleep one evening late in May, still thinly veiled in white, and when the rosy breath of wakening dawn stole faintly over the grassy billows, lo! all in a night the face of nature had changed, and the foot-hills met the sunshine clothed in fairest, freshest green. Who can welcome spring as could the exiles of the old days on the frontier? How those fair women, those restless little ones, seemed to glow and gladden after the long, long months of seclusion when, snow-bound, they were penned within the stockade or limited to the sentry-lines of some straggling prairie post! Now swarming forth like bees they came to greet the sunshine, the softening air, the tiny, shrinking little flowers trembling in the breeze along the southward slopes, and one exquisite morning late in May, perched on the very verge of the steep bluff overlooking

the stream, Constance Morgan had flung to the winds her rippling mane of auburn hair and stood stretching forth a pair of long, slender arms, encased in very shabby and shining serge, as though welcoming the first sight of the distant lowlands,—the broad, beautiful valley of the Mini Ska. All the long winter she had borne on her white shoulders the cares of an army home, and that a home without a mother. Loving hearts and hands, it is true, were there to aid her. Morgan's devotion to his invalid wife during her two years of martyrdom and his grief over her loss were matters that had won deep sympathy even in a crowded garrison bent on getting all the enjoyment possible out of their few months of home life. All the previous summer, spring, and fall officers and men of the cavalry, at least, had spent in exciting campaign, and no man could tell how soon the order would come returning them once more to the field, leaving the wives and little ones to watch and pray. "Make hay while the sun shines" seemed to be the social axiom of the cavalry in those days. Enjoy the too brief days as best ye may, for soon the summer will come, when all men must work at their appointed trade, and seven months out of twelve and sometimes more it meant separation from the loved ones within the guarded limits of the forts, a separation that, in too many cases, proved but the entrance upon that which on earth, at least, is final. There were music and dancing, play-acting and feasting, therefore, through the winter at Ransom, and frequent exchange of jovial hospitality with the big-hearted townsmen over and away at the trans-continental road, but there wasn't a day when somebody, from Tintop down, wasn't sure to drop in and have a chat or a game of checkers, or in the evening a hand at whist, with Morgan, who sat up in an easy-chair and was made as comfortable as willing hearts and hands could devise, and Mrs. Vinton not only taught Lot and Billy as she taught her own, but time and again sent them home in garments newly fashioned, but with pardonable mendacity represented to be something she had that didn't fit her daughter or that her little Jim had outgrown. Connie's clear eyes saw through the stratagem, and her soft red lips quivered as she kissed the fair round cheek of the loving woman who so well knew how to bless and comfort, yet rob the act of every hint of charity. And strangely, too, Connie's scant supply of commissary was eked out by many a dainty sent to Morgan's door from somewhere along the line. No one ever gave a dinner, or luncheon, or supper party, that long winter, without a remembrance of some kind for those motherless kids, oftentimes including some comforting beverage for old Morgan himself. Even the sutler, whom the men damned for a skinflint, found means to "chip in" unknown to Morgan, who didn't at all like him, and the surreptitious dozens of stone bottles of stout, glass dittoes of Bass and Budweiser, that had been smuggled in by the back gate during the last year of Mrs. Morgan's illness, never found their way on the bill. He had sent Connie at Christmas a dress of soft black cashmere over which the child's womanly eyes had glistened, and which, impulsively, she had taken to her father's room, opening it before him and saying, "Isn't it lovely? Wasn't it just lovely of him?" And then she was brought to sudden realization of

this rancor towards the trader by the flush that overspread Morgan's face and the heavy frown between his eyes.

"Connie, child, you shall have it, of course; you need it; but we can't take presents from Curran. He must put it on the bill," he said.

But neither on Connie's slender back nor Curran's bulky bill did those dress-goods ever appear. She sent him a misspelled, grateful little note, saying how it touched them all that he should have so kindly remembered her, but papa was "inflexable" in his views about accepting "presants" from friends they might never be able to repay, and honest Curran,—honest at least in his desire to do a kindness to the tall slip of a girl with the big brown eyes and auburn hair that made him think, he sometimes said, of a colleen he'd lost long years before,—honest Curran mistook her meaning entirely, thought her words Morgan's, and, mindful of some caustic comments the big lieutenant had made anent sutlers' checks he sought to collect at the pay-table several years before, had all his Irish aroused and was made fighting mad. "I'll sind him a resated bill, bedad, and cut his acquaintance intirelee," said Curran that night in relating the incident to some of the boys in the club-room, whereupon that ne'er-do-well and scapegrace Briggs promptly besought him to take like cognizance of the first thing he, Lieutenant Briggs, might say, as he despaired otherwise of ever squaring his account.

But the incident bore its weight of woe to Connie, despite the merriment it gave the boys. Acting under the advice of his colonel and his friends, Morgan was diligently turning over to the adjutant fifty dollars a month of his scanty pay in order that critics and creditors alike might know he was doing all a poor devil of a broken-down lieutenant could do to pay his debts without absolutely starving his household. The balance went to Connie, and with this she was expected to feed, clothe, and comfort the family, pay the cook, laundress, and striker. Morgan had no life-insurance, and in those days could get none. Curran was one of his heaviest creditors, and Curran had been perfectly willing not only to wait, but to open his storehouse or purse-strings still wider for the struggling fellow's benefit. Only so many dollars a month could be parcelled out for the butcher and baker, the grocer and the commissary, and Connie kept her books, and, aided by her lady friends, kept her accounts. But over and above all these necessary expenses were certain dainties and luxuries which Curran had authorized black Mammy to draw for at the store whenever the supply was getting low, and Morgan, insisting now on auditing the accounts, could find no such items on the bills rendered, and the truth came out. Curran went off East to buy goods just then, and Morgan did not write the letter his heart was pouring out when he learned how in secret the rough fellow had been so long his benefactor, but he forbade all such traffic in future, and Lot and Billy howled for oranges and raisins in vain. Christmas found their little stockings filled. Many an army mother, planning for her own brood, had remembered the motherless in the humble quarters down the row. But no one could tell whose hand had sent the rocking-horse and the big wax doll that were found by Penner at the door when he opened the house on

Christmas morning. Suspicion attached to several heads, including Tintop's, whose head, by the way, had been cracked by a shell during the war, and a portion of whose skull, so rumor had it, had been replaced by a silver plate, which led to his wearing a nickname and a wig. But one and all the accused established what Mrs. Whaling once pronounced an alibi, "because they had sent something else." Then they thought of Trooper Schramm, now a fine-looking dragoon, consummately at home in his business; but Schramm hadn't been near the house for two weeks. A paymaster's escort was needed to convoy that official to distant winter cantonments, and Schramm had promptly asked to be allowed to go. This time he didn't say "mit dem fellers" as he had in the field the autumn before, neither did he add "once" or "alretty." Schramm was "studying book English," said the first sergeant. The paymaster got home to his Christmas all right,—he needed no escort when his money was gone,—but Schramm and his squad trotted in two days later, after the turkey and cranberry sauce were all devoured, so Schramm could have had nothing whatever to do with the gifts sent out from town. So long as they had them, Lot and Billy didn't care who was the donor. They believed all the more in Santa Claus. It was Connie who thought and wondered; it was Connie, alas! who hoped and dreamed.

Among the daily visitors to the house Perry Thornton, second lieutenant of Manning's troop, had been prominent all winter, and there wasn't a handsomer, blither boy in all the regiment when he joined. He was barely twenty-two, with a face almost womanly fair, and a form as slender and graceful as boy's could be. He rode and danced and sang well. He didn't drink; he wouldn't gamble. He was a soldier's son, an enthusiastic youngster who had seen some years of schooling and travel in Europe, and who had much to tell of soldiers who had won the V. C. or the Iron Cross. "Now in Europe," said he, "the officer is held as a hero who, at the risk of his life, bore off a wounded comrade to whom it meant death if abandoned." The cross for valor, pinned on his breast by royal hands, was the least reward to which he could look. Joining the regiment just at the end of the autumn work, and reading of the narrow escape of Lieutenant Morgan on the way, Thornton's first longing was to make the acquaintance of the gallant subaltern who had so bravely stood by the humble recruit and got his wound in saving him. Down went his ideal to dust when a grizzled, careworn, sad-faced veteran was borne from the ambulance into the homely quarters, and somebody said, "The old man's about petered." Thornton could not understand it. "In England or in Germany officers and men would have been lining the way and standing at salute," said he, "for a fellow who did what Mr. Morgan did."

"O-h, up there when he went deer-hunting, do you mean? Oh, yes, I remember,—helping Schramm out when he got hit. Ye-es, that was all right," said one of the young gentlemen of the regiment, and in so saying conveyed the idea to the new-comer that there was nothing in that sort of thing to excite remark. It was the rule, not the exception, in the American cavalry. "We'd all do just as much,"—as,

indeed, very probably they would. But Thornton determined he would cultivate Morgan, decorated or not, and so it had happened that it was the "plebe," the newest comer to the regiment, who spent an hour almost every afternoon before stables playing checkers with the invalid veteran, rarely noticing silent, busy Connie, who came and went, or sat beside them with her needlework, darning the youngsters' stockings or sewing on buttons by the dozen, yet saying never a word. Perry had no end of interest in his new profession, but none whatever in children. It was the proper thing for him to be devoted to the senior subaltern who in other armies, perhaps, would have won such distinction, and he wrote with both pride and complacency to his friends at home of his daily intercourse with a fellow who did what Beresford was V. C.'d for at Ulundi. "But nobody out here seems to think it worth mentioning," he added. He was immensely proud of being second lieutenant in a troop whose captain had won three brevets with the regulars, and whose first lieutenant had done as much with the volunteers, both in the great civil war; but he hadn't been long enough in the service to find out that brevets followed on the heels of the great Rebellion like rain on the boom of a battle, deluging everybody who happened to be around. He found Morgan loved to hear of life in foreign armies, while no one else had time to listen. He loved to talk, and so he came. He loved to hear of cavalry campaigns during the war, and soon got Morgan to telling and explaining, and so, little by little, he came to be looked upon as the sunshine of their day. He was "pulling Morgan out of himself," and when the spring came on the "old man" was surely better, able to sun himself on the southern porch and watch the drills on the broad parade. Connie was but a child. Who could have a thought for her? And so here she stood this exquisite May morning, just bordering on womanhood, as the sweet spring buds were bursting into bloom, and with yearning, outstretched arms, with a deeper, fonder glow in the big brown eyes than mortal yet had seen, gazing longingly away down the distant valley, down along the silver windings of the stream, fringed by the fresh green of the cottonwoods, away from the dull brown buildings of the old frontier post, away from barracks, quarters, and corral, away from its bustling life and cares and sorrows, away from that picketed enclosure far out over the prairie where now the loved mother had been resting long months beyond the twelve, away from aging father, from laughing girl and romping boy, Connie Morgan's heart, shining through her steadfast eyes, was following the fast-fading dust-cloud that told where the squadrons were marching sturdily away to drive the Indians from their old haunts down the wild wastes of the Mini Ska, and Perry Thornton riding on his first campaign.

IV.

The cavalry battalion had been gone only two days. Some few of the officers' families, well assured that it would be Thanksgiving in earnest before they could hope to see the campaigners again, had

taken wing to the East and were domiciled with friends or relatives far from scenes which so constantly brought to mind the image of the absent husband and father. In most cases, however, the little households remained at the post, assured by department head-quarters that they should be undisturbed in the tenure of their army homes. Morgan, whose health and spirits had slowly revived as the sun came northward over the line, had striven to convince Old Tintop and the surgeon that it would do him good to go, but was flatly denied the luxury he craved and bidden to remain at the post. The department commander came out to look over the field in early May, and told Morgan that he meant to keep him on duty at the post all summer, in the hope that the autumn would find him promoted to his captaincy. Then he might be able to get an order to go before a retiring board and so home to the old State and old friends he had not seen for years. Morgan thanked the kind-hearted chief for all his help and consideration, but his tired eyes wandered away over the prairie to the lonely grave he often managed to visit now. If it were only possible to retire for good and all, how willingly would he go and be laid away there by Carrie's side, were there only some provision for Constance and the babies! It appalled him to realize that they were dependent absolutely upon so slender a thread as his life; that he must struggle on, must exist, must suffer and try, at least, to be strong that they might not starve. If only those debts were paid, if only he could retire and take the children to some quiet Eastern home, however humble, where they might be sent to school and where Connie might receive the education thus far so utterly neglected, then Morgan could live on, grateful and almost content. He could surely get some clerkship, some desk-work that would enable him to add a few hundred dollars yearly to the allowance of a retired dragoon. He did not begin to know, poor fellow, how universal was the theory among business-men that old soldiers were unfit for business of any kind. He wrote to Carrie's brothers again, saying nothing, of course, of how often and how much he had helped them in the past, and begged them to find some opening that would warrant his retiring. No answer came. He wrote again. Then Bob sent a few curt lines:

"Yours rec'd, contents noted. Tho't Wm. had ans'd or wld have done so. Business very slack. Times hard. No opening of any kind. H'd to dischg two clks last month. Better hang on to your present situation awhile longer. If anything turns up will let you know.

"Yr bro. aff'y."

Morgan read human nature well enough to see just how much that meant. He would "hang on to the situation" as a matter of course, despite the fact that the doctor said the rheumatism would hang on to him as long as he remained in that climate. Both General C—— and the colonel had again interested themselves in his behalf, and the railway managers said they could place him in their office in town when he got ready to retire. The salary was very small, but would help. The work was exacting, however, and the doctor said he simply could not do it in that climate.

"Never mind, old friend, we'll fix it somehow," said Tintop, cheerily, as he came to say good-by, looking very much the younger of the two as Morgan leaned heavily on his stick. "You just stay here and run the ordnance office this summer. There's bound to be promotion by fall." And so, sadly enough, the veteran trooper had seen the squadrons ride away, and he was left sole representative of the commissioned force of his regiment at old Fort Ransom, and not till they had been gone two days did he note that Connie was drooping.

"What is it, Little Mother?" he said, fondly stroking back the tumbling mass of auburn hair and kissing her white forehead. "Tired out with all your household care? Growing too fast? Lot and Billy too much for you now?"

The big pathetic brown eyes were swimming a little, but she looked bravely up. "Perhaps it's spring fever," she said, with an attempt at laughing it all lightly away. "I'm sure there's nothing else. I'm only a trifle fagged. It will be all right now that we all can get out again in the sunshine every day."

She was fastening his necktie for him at the moment, then, patting his grizzled cheek, she took the whisk broom to dust the worn old fatigue-coat preparatory to letting him stump forth on his halting way to the ordnance storehouse, but there came a rousing rat-tat-tat at the front door just at the instant, and, Mammy being up to her elbows in flour and Penner away at the commissary, Connie sprang to answer, and there, precise and soldierly as ever, stood Schramm.

"Why, Schr-r-amm!" she cried, delightedly. "Why—when—how did you get back?"

"Sergeant Schultz, gnädige Fräulein, was sent back with despatches, and I came with him. Is the Herr Lieutenant within? I bring letters." And he handed her a packet.

"Come right in, Schramm; papa will be so glad to see you."

And thus bidden, yet ever unbending, Schramm stepped to the inner door, and there, hand at salute and heels together, he stood attention, his kind blue eyes alight with fidelity and affection.

"Hello, Schramm!" exclaimed Morgan, limping around the big base-burner with extended hand, which the soldier grasped respectfully an instant, then returned to his invariable attitude. "Well, you must have ridden hard."

"Only forty-five miles, sir. We left them in camp on Bear Fork at midnight. There was news from the agency. We go back this afternoon with orders to catch them to-morrow at Painted Lodge."

Hurriedly opening the packet, Morgan glanced over the contents: two official letters for himself, and a smaller note. "Why, Con, this is for you—from Thornton," he said, in surprise. Then, never noting the eager, almost incredulous light that flashed into her eyes, or the instant rush of color to her cheeks and brow, he tore open the first letter, an order from Tintop to send on certain arms for the use of scouts. He glanced quickly up to send Schramm for the ordnance sergeant, but Schramm had disappeared. There stood Constance, her eyes dancing, her red lips parted, her bosom heaving, languor and pallor utterly banished from her face, grasping in both hands the letter

he had given her, devouring its pages with all her soul in her eyes, utterly lost to him and to the world at large in the rapture of a young girl's first dream of love. For the first time in his life Morgan saw that his child was beautiful. For the first time it dawned upon him she was no longer a child. For the first time in his life the father called her to his side and she did not hear.

"Connie," he said. Then at last, almost sternly, "Constance!"

"Oh! what, papa dear? Forgive me, I was so—I was——"

"Yes," said he, vaguely, feeling all helpless and bewildered yet. "Yes. What does he say? Why does he write to you?"

Another rush of color, a new flash in the great brown eyes, yet more hesitancy, more embarrassment.

"Why, there's a letter for you, papa,—he says so; but—this is about something else."

Slowly Morgan turned, unwilling to think, reluctant to believe, unable to wound. It was all so sudden, so utterly unlooked-for. What on earth could Thornton have to say to her? Where was the letter to him? Oh, here, inside Gray's despatch. He tore it open: "Dear Old Man,—In the mail sent forward to catch us there comes a welcome letter from father. He says that Wall, of the Ninth, and Clinton, of the Sixth, have applied for retirement. You are sure of your double bars then before September, and we are all rejoicing. I couldn't help writing, as I wanted to be the first to tell you. Please give the enclosed to Connie. Love to the kids, all three. Yours, P. T." Give what to Connie? He turned the envelope inside out, and there was no enclosure other than the letter. Mechanically he stretched forth his hand.

"Let me see your letter, Connie," he said, and to his dismay she for an instant shrank back. Then, seeing the pain in his eyes, she sprang towards him.

"Oh, do, papa; read every word," she said. "Indeed, I'd rather, —only he—only they didn't want you to know it—just yet." But he did not seem to hear her.

"I only asked to see if it could go inside here," he said, slowly. "Thornton speaks of an enclosure, and probably that was it.—Here, Schramm," he cried, hastening to the door, "will you tell the ordnance sergeant I want him right off? I'll meet him at the store-room. Wait a minute; just give me your arm down the steps." And, leaning on the blue-shirted, muscular shoulder, Morgan stumped away out through the little gate; out across the grassy parade where the infantry companies were busy at drill; and there was a cloud on both faces now, as, saluting at the gate, Schramm fell respectfully to the rear.

And yet, an hour later, when Morgan returned to his quarters and Lot and Billy came tumbling tumultuously to greet him, and he, moody and troubled, sent them off in supreme content to buy a nickel's worth of gum-drops at the store, then came slowly to his door, a vague sense of new trouble was tugging at his heart, a doubt as to what he ought to do or say numbing his faculties. Pausing at the threshold, he heard Connie's voice, low, rich, tremulous with happiness, singing one of her mother's old dear songs, a thing she had not done since the

bitter day they followed the mother to her grave, and the instant he entered she came to throw her arms about his neck and raise her glowing face to his lips. He took it between his hands and looked down gravely, fondly, yet with such a world of trouble in his eyes. The song was hushed. Once more the color mounted to her temples, but the big, soft eyes never flinched nor faltered.

"Read that letter now, papa dear," she simply said. "I want you to read it." And then when he would not, but sank wearily in his chair, she went and fetched the letter she had placed upon his desk, and perched herself upon the arm of the chair and nestled her soft cheek against his weather-beaten jowl, and opened the note before his eyes, which in turn he promptly shut. Then she strove to pull them open by means of the lashes, and then he turned his head away.

"I don't want to read the letter, Con," he said, remorsefully. "I never meant to let our Little Mother think I——"

"Then I'll read it, papa," she began, interrupting him, whereat he clapped his hands to his ears. "Well, at least you must see the picture," she cried, and, jumping up, she ran to the mantel with a tintype, a likeness of a tall young fellow with a downy moustache, arrayed in cavalry scouting garb, with prairie belt and holster, a very presentable young dragoon, too, the second lieutenant of Manning's troop; but the eyes of the first lieutenant thereof looked less kindly on this counterfeit presentment than ever they had upon the face of the original.

"Where was it taken?" he asked, rather abruptly, feeling that he must say something.

"Mr. Thornton says an itinerant artist drove out from town and met them at the first camp and took quite a number and some groups. He had two of them taken just like this, to send home, and dropped the odd one in here, saying it was a philopœna and a bribe."

"Bribe? For what?" demanded Morgan. "Why should he bribe my little girl?"

"Oh, there was no need," she laughed, blithely. "He—they all, he said, wanted something your Connie was only too glad to get and give. Now you must read it and see for yourself, papa."

But he would not. He was ashamed of the fear that for a moment had possessed him, that she had consented to a correspondence with Thornton without once asking her father's counsel,—she, his little Connie, his first-born. True, she was older at fifteen than many town-bred girls at twenty, for her childhood had been nipped in the bud, and since those slender shoulders had borne the care and burden of woman for two long years, was it to be forbidden her to know aught of woman's glory? Only, had he been blind all the time? Day after day had Thornton been their visitor, yet never in all that time had the father seen or suspected in the young officer any more interest in Constance than he displayed in Lot or Billy. True, she was almost always a silent attendant at their daily game, or an absorbed listener to their talk, rarely leaving them except to go into the other room to moderate the clamor of the youngsters, who, being burly and aggressive, were too often involved in a game of give and take in which

they were fairly matched. But Thornton's manner to her, which was at first simply kindly and jovial, as it was to the other children, had certainly changed to greater deference as the winter wore on. Little by little he saw how her father leaned upon the girl, how thoughtful, how devoted she was. He had been reared a gentleman. He had a mother and sisters whom he dearly loved, and from earliest boyhood he had been taught by his soldier father the lesson of gentleness, courtesy, and consideration. From the other officers in the regiment, most of whom had known her in pinafores, her greeting was simply "Hello, Con!" or "Morning, Connie; how's dad to-day?" Thornton's impulse from the first when he met this tall slip of a girl in solemn black was to call her "Miss Morgan," which made her blush furiously. Later on, laughed at by the veteran sub., he had compromised on "Miss Connie," but not until he had been a daily visitor for several months had it come to "Connie." Morgan never knew how she had fled to her room and nearly cried her eyes out the morning the battalion marched away. It was after breakfast that Mrs. Woods had come for her and, with other ladies, had driven out to the butte south of the post, from whose side the Mini Ska could be traced for miles, but to whose summit Connie alone had been bold and active enough to climb. All he saw and realized now was that his darling had been, pale and languid, plainly drooping for a while, and then all on a sudden, at the coming of that little note, sunshine, gladness, gratitude, joy, all had beamed from her speaking eyes, had bubbled from her girlish heart in song. He had mourned the mother's loss before, but it was as nothing compared with the helpless yearning that possessed him now. Who was there to counsel, who was there to take his beloved child to her heart, and with mother love and sympathy, with mother kiss and clasping arms, in the sure haven of mother's changeless love win from the virgin soul its cherished secret, then guide and guard and counsel as only mothers can?

Poor Morgan! He would not read the boy's frank letter. That might imply doubt of his little girl. He could not consult such friends as Mrs. Freeman; she had taken her babies and flitted away to the sea-shore for the summer. Mrs. Stannard, once his wife's kind friend and adviser, had gone long months before, when the major went to his new station. There were loving women, kind women, motherly women, at the post, yet not those to whom he could speak of anything so sacred. Neither could he bring himself to the faintest reference to the matter in talking with his child. There was simply one thing which he could do, thought Morgan. All the winter he had been growing fond and fonder of the bright-faced, glad-voiced, soldierly young fellow; but now, now, if it should transpire that all this time Thornton had been laying siege to Connie's innocent heart, he could hate him and in time crush and punish.

At noon the sergeant came to say the stores were boxed and ready for shipment. Would the lieutenant sign the invoices? Over at the adjutant's office the infantry bugler had just sounded mess and orderly call. The companies were going in to dinner, the noise and bustle around the barracks contrasting strongly with the silence and desertion

over there across the parade where stood the cavalry quarters. As Morgan came forth into the bright sunshine of the first June day, he noted how the snow-belt on the distant peak had lifted higher in the last forty-eight hours, and thought with a heavy sigh how care and trouble had sunk so much deeper around his heart. Major Rhett, of the infantry, temporary commander of the post, was standing by the sundial as Morgan and his sergeant came trudging along. One or two officers were with him. A telegraph message was in his hand, and he was looking strangely worried. All of the group ceased their talk and glanced at Morgan as he neared them.

"The ordnance stores are ready for shipment, major," said he. "The colonel will have a couple of wagons at Alkali Station to meet the freight to-night. We have billed it there."

"How far were they camped from Alkali last night, Mr. Morgan?"

"How far, sir? Well, they were on Bear Fork, probably fifteen miles north of west of Alkali. They camp to-night at Willow Springs, and to-morrow under Painted Lodge Buttes, and——"

"Yes, I know," interrupted the commander, "and it was at Willow Springs Major Graves was to meet and pay them, I believe?"

"So I heard, sir. Though at first I rather imagined they wouldn't be paid now until after next muster."

"Well, they won't. Graves was robbed at Minden Station, early this morning, of every dollar, and the robbers wore cavalry uniforms."

V.

Old Curran, the sutler,—for sutler he was long years before his designation was changed to post trader, and longer still before his occupation was wiped out entirely by the civilizing process which made bar-tenders of "blue-coats,"—old Curran had been losing money all winter, and was growling about it. He looked to the payment following the April muster to recoup him for his losses, as many a good soldier was deep in his books. The payment should have been made in May, but for some reason it was postponed, possibly in order that the paymaster might make the circuit of the cordon of posts in the bright weather of early June; but a pack of young rascals and malcontents at the Indian reservation had been turbulent all spring, and no sooner was the snow out of the Mini Ska valley than the cattle came after the budding grass and the Sioux came after the cattle. They were hungry, no doubt,—the Sioux sometimes are, despite the fact that they are excellent providers and know how to take care of themselves, and the difference between them and certain tractable and therefore systematically ill-treated tribes is, that when they are not given what they want they take it. Heaven helps those who help themselves, and in their dealings with the wards of the nation the United States of America have this resemblance to heaven. The Sioux helped themselves so liberally to cattle—and herders—this particular spring that Tintop, with six troops of his devoted regiment, was hurried forth to brush them out of the Mini Ska, and then to go

on and help some comrades four hundred miles away who were too few in number for the work in hand. To Curran's disgust, the battalion marched out leaving its score at the shop unsettled. Not that the soldiers could help it at all, but because they themselves were creditors who couldn't collect. Then, to Curran's delight, it was announced that Major Graves was sent out by rail to pay them before they got too far away. Curran rejoicingly set forth to meet him and be present at the ceremony, and thereby, doubtless, collect large portion of the dollars due him. Curran thoughtfully, too, loaded up a couple of wagons with pies, cakes, cheese, pickles, crackers, canned fruits, bottled beer, whiskey, and tobacco, lest the boys shouldn't know what to do with what remained of their money. This load he pushed forward on the heels of the command. Then his own fine team and spring-wagon were sent down the valley to Alkali Station, whither he proposed to follow by rail and meet the paymaster on his arrival, and to entertain him royally on the drive out to the Springs. It was estimated that the battalion, breaking camp on Bear Fork at 5.30 A.M., could unsaddle and pitch its tents at Willow Springs by noon. It was estimated that leaving Alkali, say at six A.M., after a hearty breakfast, the paymaster would be trundled away up the valley of the Dry Fork and be landed at the Springs, twenty-five miles north of the railway, in plenty of time to meet them, and Tintop was ordered to detach a sergeant and ten men to ride over to Alkali from their camp on Bear Fork to bivouac at the station over-night and escort the paymaster up the next day. Graves left department head-quarters on the west-bound express, his clerk, his valise full of funds necessary for the payment of the battalion, and he himself, all comfortably ensconced in the Pullman car. They were due at Alkali at four A.M. They could retire early, have a good night's rest, and be called by the porter in plenty of time to be up and dressed and to enjoy a camp breakfast with their escort at the little station—a mere siding with some cattle chutes and pens—before starting on their drive.

Standing where Constance had stood on the summit of the high, precipitous butte that lay southwest of the fort, one could see the valley of the Mini Ska stretching away to the eastward a distance of nearly fifty miles. Then the stream seemed to bring up suddenly against a line of bluffs that turned it off to the northeast, and this general direction it followed another fifty miles. The land was low and undulating along the left bank, while on the right, between the stream and the bold line of bluffs to the south, there was barely room for the railway. Fordable here near the fort, the Mini Ska speedily deepened and widened and became sluggish in flow as it rolled out into the lowlands after its tumbling rush through the mountain-chain at the west. Every year since its establishment had a cavalry column marched away from Fort Ransom to straighten out matters between the Sioux and the settlers who were venturing too close to the reservation. The first year or two the trail led along the west bank, hugging the stream, but, as it was found that this was the longer, hotter, and dustier way, a new route was decided on, cutting across the big bend and winding along over the foot-hills of the range, from which several

streams of clear, cool water came pouring forth, speedily to become murky and turbid on reaching the broad plain below. The first day's march lay almost due east from Ransom and parallel with the Mini Ska, the next veered around towards the northeast, and camp was always made at Bear Fork. Not until the fourth camp at Painted Lodge did the trail and the stream again come together, and from that point down to the disputed territory, the pet raiding-ground of the restless "young men," the two were never far apart. West of Painted Lodge the Sioux did not often venture, though the broad bottom-land within this elbow of the Ska was a fine grazing-ground.

The railway, coming up from the southeast and over a high plateau, dropped down to the valley by means of a long, winding ravine scooped out for it by the Antelope, a little tributary that joined the Mini Ska just at the elbow, and here, at the point where the rail and the river after running parallel for eighty miles suddenly quit company, the line shooting eastward, the stream northeast,—here stood Alkali Station. Cattle-men had built a low bridge over the stream at this point, with the intention of making Alkali the shipping station for their beeves, and from this place a sandy road ran down the left bank to Painted Lodge Butte and away to the agencies. Once upon a time the mails were carried that way, and a stage ran twice a week between Alkali and the reservation, but when a rival railway sent a line across the Missouri and tapped the lands of the Dakotas far up to the northeast, the agency freight, mail, and passengers were sent around that way, and Alkali became a deserted village. There stood the old stage-house, the cattle-chutes, and the rickety dépôt, but no trains stopped there now except on signal, and the telegraph instrument and operator had been moved to Minden, some twenty-five miles farther west. Here, too, was a bridge over the Mini Ska and a cattle-shipping point. Here the ranchmen who did not care to take the extra twenty-five-mile gallop to Butteville had all their mail addressed, and Minden speedily assumed the mild and modest importance which Alkali had lost.

And it was at Minden, said Major Rhett, that the paymaster was robbed that morning soon after dawn, and robbed by men in cavalry overcoats. Morgan listened a moment, simply stunned.

"When did the news come in, sir?" asked he of the major.

"Ten minutes ago, as soon as they could repair the wires which were cut. The sheriff is on his way out here now."

"Where is the paymaster?"

"They're coming up on a freight from Minden this afternoon, he and his clerk."

"But—I don't understand," said Morgan: "how on earth did he get to Minden? Why did he come so far west? The escort was to meet him at Alkali, so I was told."

"That's just what nobody understands, and what he'll explain later, I presume."

An orderly came hastily from the direction of the office, and, halting, saluted the post commander.

"The sergeant-major says they were assigned to C Company, sir, for rations."

There was an awkward silence a moment. Finally the commander wheeled on Morgan:

"You've known those couriers some time, haven't you, Mr. Morgan? What is their reputation?"

"Our men, sir? Schultz and Schramm, do you mean? Why, major, the sergeant is one of our veterans, a man we all trust. Schramm is not a year with us yet, but he's as good as they make 'em, I think, in Germany. Surely they are not suspected? They came in with orders and despatches."

"Very true, but they passed within sight of Minden if they came back by the trail, and through it if they followed the stage road. They may have seen or heard something. At all events, I wish to question them," was the major's answer. "What time did they reach the post, Mr. Adjutant?"

"Just at guard-mounting, sir."

Rhett pondered a moment. "The colonel's note says he was aroused at midnight by couriers from the agency who had had a hard ride and could go no farther. But for his orders to meet the paymaster at Willow Springs to-day, he says, he would have pushed on to Painted Lodge,—made a forty-mile march. It really looks very threatening down the valley, and now that the money's gone and the paymaster can't reach him I'm in hopes he will push ahead. Already people are wiring out here from town, asking whether the Indian rumors are true. They've got a story there that ten people were killed yesterday."

"Yes, sir," put in the adjutant; "our market-man brought it out here an hour ago. It's going all over the post. They say in town one reason there's no chance of catching these robbers is that the cavalry has been ordered to come on with all speed, and that a courier rode out to them from Minden before daybreak this morning. Despatches were sent them before the line was cut."

Away on the winding road to the southwest towards the distant frontier town a couple of wagons could be seen slowly moving towards the post. Beyond them little dust-clouds, rapidly sailing over the plain, told where fleetest horsemen were speeding. The men coming out from their dinner were gathering in groups on the verandas, chatting in low tones and watching the group of officers. Presently the orderly came hurrying back alone.

"What orders did you give those couriers, Mr. Wood?"

"Nothing especial, sir. Schultz asked if they were at liberty to start back as soon as they wished, and I said yes."

"Then they must be taking a nap," said the major. "What with being up most of last night and having to ride all to-night, they need it. Their consciences are clear if they can sleep all the morning."

The orderly reached them as the major concluded, halted half a dozen paces away, and reported:

"Sergeant Shea says the couriers left nearly an hour ago, sir."

"Left an hour ago! Which way?"

"He doesn't know, sir. Private Burns says he saw them ride away after the quartermaster's corral at 11.30,—going towards town."

VI.

It was one o'clock that afternoon before the sheriff reached the post. Butteville, the thriving county seat, lay just five miles away to the southwest, and a hard prairie road connected it with the post. As a distributing point to the mines and a market for the ranchmen the growing town had shot rapidly into importance. Two banks, both reliable, two hotels, well patronized, and shops and stores in good number, were barely able to supply the demands. Dozens of bustling men breakfasted every morning at the big eating-house of the railway company, where the west-bound express was supposed to find ample sustenance for its passengers before pushing on for the long day's run through the mountains. The sheriff and the coroner, as was the case in most frontier cities of the day, were by long odds the hardest-worked officials, and just now the sheriff was fairly used up. The first intimation of anything wrong east of Butteville was the sudden stop of the wires. Up to daybreak train-despatchers and night operators sitting, red-eyed and weary, over their instruments, after the long hours of vigil, found everything working smoothly. The night had been still, neither storm nor excitement anywhere along the line, until just about four o'clock Butte, called up by Pawnee Station, was asked, "What's afire at Alkali?" Butte didn't know,—hadn't heard. Pawnee explained that a despatch for Paymaster Graves from Minden met No. 3 at Pawnee, and said bridge was down at Alkali. Two ranchmen from over Painted Lodge way rode into Pawnee at three A.M. and said hell was broke loose down the Mini Ska,—Sioux scalping and burning everything in sight. Where were Colonel Winthrop and the cavalry? Butte answered: The colonel and six companies had marched for Painted Lodge two days before, couldn't be far from Alkali now. Sioux wouldn't dare come that far up the valley. Who said the bridge was down and burnt? Pawnee replied: Hold on a minute. More refugees from valley are reported hurrying to the railway, and Pawnee wanted to see the ranchmen who first came before they got good and drunk and couldn't talk reliably. Perhaps Minden could tell about the bridge at Alkali. Butte called Minden accordingly. Minden said some of the cavalry had come up from Alkali an hour before, said they'd been sent to Alkali in the first place to meet the Paymaster on No. 3, but they found the bridge across the Mini Ska afire, so the ambulance, escort, etc., were all on the way up to Minden, and these two rode ahead with a despatch for Major Graves, explaining the situation and telling him to keep on and meet them here. Minden sent it to Pawnee, and Pawnee gave it to the porter of the sleeping-car. That's all Minden knew about fire or anything else. Butteville was the west end of the division, however, and Butteville demanded further particulars,—told Minden to ask the cavalry if any of the buildings at Alkali were reported afire. Minden said wait a minute, he'd find out: No. 3's head-light just coming around Buffalo Bluff. The soldiers had gone out to meet the lieutenant as soon as assured that the despatch had been delivered to No. 3, and they were now watering their horses at the creek. It was just light enough to see them out

there. Then No. 3 reached Minden, was duly reported in and out, and then the wires went down. No. 3 came into Butteville at breakfast on time and all right. The division superintendent asked what was the matter at Alkali Station, and the conductor replied, nothing that he knew of. They had come lively down Antelope grade and struck the Mini Ska valley, running forty-five miles an hour, which they didn't check, as Major Graves's telegram said, "Come on to Minden." Had he seen the despatch? Why, certainly. It was all right, signed by some lieutenant or other, commanding escort. Had he seen no fire at Alkali? Oh, yes, over on the bank of the stream five hundred yards or so from the station there was some fire. Thought it was only a camp-fire or two. There were two or three men, soldiers, he thought, on the old platform, but it was barely dawn, and the engine left such a trail of smoke and steam that the men were enveloped in it, and he couldn't make them out distinctly. No. 3 dropped the major and his clerk at Minden, where other soldiers met him, and then hurried on. "What's the trouble?" "Well," said the superintendent, "since the moment you pulled out from Minden to this moment, Mr. Hart, we have been cut off. Not a word can we get from the east."

By the time the express pushed on for the west again a couple of hand-cars had been despatched eastward in the vain hope of finding the break near town, and these were overhauled ten miles out by the engine and caboose sent scouting down the valley. Not until they were within a mile of Minden did they find the gap, and along there the wires had been clipped in half a dozen places. The superintendent gathered the particulars while his men were patching. Here at the station, surrounded by a knot of excited ranchmen and settlers, were Major Graves and his clerk, but all they had to show was the telegram. It read plainly enough:

"Minden Station, June 3, 3.05 A.M. Major Graves, U. S. Army, on No. 3, Pawnee Station. Bridge down at Alkali. Cannot cross Mini Ska. Come on to Minden: escort meet you there.

"EDWARDS, *Lieutenant Commanding.*"

Never suspecting anything wrong, Major Graves sent his clerk to notify the conductor and show him the despatch. The porter made them coffee and a light breakfast at the *buffet*, so as to enable them to start at once for the longer ride that their going on to Minden would necessitate. They were met as they jumped off the car by a couple of troopers in overcoats, thimble-belts, and the slouch-hat then much affected by the cavalry on campaigns. "This way, sir," said one: "the lieutenant says the escort's ready to start the moment the major is." He made a move to take the valise, but instinctively the major held on. The train pulled out as they stepped around to the rear of the *dépôt*. Graves could see a little knot of horsemen close to the stream. "The boys will be glad to see you, sir, and we've a long ride ahead of us," said his conductor, and in another moment Graves was tripped, thrown heavily to the ground, bound, and gagged, and there he lay helpless, while his clerk was similarly handled, and away went

the valise with its precious thousands, he had no idea whither. He saw only three or four men in all, but they were all in cavalry overcoats, and the horses and equipments, so far as he could judge in the light and distance, looked like those of the regulars,—not cowboys or road-agents. They vanished in the twinkling of an eye, and not until they had been gone fifteen minutes or more did the station agent discover the plight of the paymaster and release him. Meantime, the wires had been cut. Pursuit was useless. No one knew who the robbers were, or which way they had gone after crossing the bridge. But an early bird around the station said he saw two soldiers galloping west along the north bank of the stream, and all Minden—what there was of it—was ready to swear that soldiers were at the bottom of the whole affair.

It was ten o'clock before they could send a despatch to Butte. It was barely 4.45 when the robbery took place. It was noon, as we have seen, when the news reached the fort, and one o'clock when the sheriff got there.

"Cowboys! Road-agents!" said he, indignantly. "No, sir. We hung the last of them two months ago. There isn't a road-agent left in Latimer County. Those robbers were soldiers,—cavalrymen, deserters from Colonel Winthrop's command. Fisk, the operator at Minden, will swear to their identity, at least of the two who came in with the despatch. Of course he sent it when he saw Lieutenant Edwards's name signed and they told him so straight a story. You send couriers after Colonel Winthrop, find out who are absent from the battalion, and you'll know who your robbers are. Then I can do something."

"Did you pass any of our men on your way out from town?" asked Rhett, after a moment's pause.

"Your men? Soldiers? Nothing but the ordnance sergeant and some wagons. Who were they, and where'd they go?"

"I don't know that they did go—that way, at least. Two couriers came with despatches this morning from Colonel Winthrop and left at 11.30 to rejoin him. Some one said they didn't go east, however, but struck out for town."

"What were their names? What were they like?" asked the sheriff, eagerly.

"They are two of our best men," answered the major. "Mr. Morgan, here, knows them well. They are Germans,—about the last men likely to become highway-robbers."

"Humph! I'd stake my commission on their innocence," said Morgan, briefly.

"Oh, of course all men are innocent until proved guilty," said the sheriff, crushingly. "All the same it's my business to look after them. You say they went to town instead of back on the trail of the battalion, major?"

"I did not," was the major's chilling reply. "I said somebody else said that they had struck out for town. Very possibly they had business there; and they were not under my jurisdiction, anyhow."

"No; they're under mine," said the sheriff. "Men need funds, as a

rule, to transact business in Butte, and soldiers without money have little business so far off their track. If they have money when their comrades haven't, where'd they get it?"

"Well, Schultz, the sergeant, has been in service some twenty years, and is reported to have saved up much more money than I ever hope or expect to," said Rhett. "I presume his bank-account can be ascertained at the First National. Schramm, the other, isn't a year in service."

"Schramm?" exclaimed the sheriff. "A good-looking, blue-eyed little Dutchman?"

"A good-looking, blue-eyed, medium-sized, slender young German, if you like, Mr. Sheriff," said Morgan. "What have you to say about him?"

"Oh, I'm saying nothing. I want you gentlemen to talk. That young fellow gets nearly thirteen dollars a month, doesn't he, major?"

"Well, rather less than that, Mr. Sheriff."

"Does he own a mine or a faro-bank hereabouts, or is he in cahoots with Curran?" asked the civilian.

"If he is, he's a dead loser this time," said the post adjutant, shortly,—he being a young officer deeply imbued with the proper idea of deference to a commanding officer and resentful of civilian impertinence, even on the part of a sheriff. "Old Curran was at Alkali waiting for first pick at the paymaster's dollars. Now his beggars on horseback are off for six months' service against the Sioux, and he'll lose most of their accounts."

"So he has no means outside of his pay, this young Deutscher? Well, that's what I wanted to know."

"Fortunes outside of the pay are not often to be found in the army," answered the major. "What makes you think Schramm has one?"

"Oh, I don't," said the sheriff. "But I believe he has more money than he can easily account for, and the sooner he is overhauled the quicker we'll know something of this morning's work." And with that the sheriff whirled his cayuse about, and, giving him a touch with the quirt, went bounding lightly away to the corrals.

"That fellow's a brute," said Mr. Woods, presently. "You don't suppose he really suspects Schramm, do you, Morgan?" But Morgan, gripping his stick, was already trudging angrily away.

That night the paymaster himself arrived at Fort Ransom, leaving his faithful clerk in conference with the officials in town. Graves was soon the centre of an eager gathering at Rhett's quarters. By this time, too, Curran was back, coming up on the afternoon freight. He had gone down to Alkali by the east-bound express the previous evening. The escort was already there, bivouacked for the night at the edge of the stream. They were up betimes and had a hot breakfast all ready for Graves, and were surprised to see the train shoot past instead of stopping to let him off. Not until the engine sent out from Butte came steaming down at noon did they know what had taken place at Minden. Then there was nothing left him but to return by the first opportunity. The sergeant and detachment remained awaiting orders,

as the paymaster might draw funds from the bank at Butte and come on again. Just as he was leaving on the afternoon freight a courier came to Alkali with orders for the sergeant, and the messenger said that the battalion had reached Willow Springs and was surprised to find no paymaster there. News from the lower valley was so threatening that Colonel Winthrop had determined, after resting a couple of hours, to push on for Painted Lodge, upon the supposition that the paymaster had missed No. 3. The escort was ordered to wait for him until next train from the east, and then, whether he came or not, to rejoin the battalion by the shortest route, following down the left bank, and bringing the extra ammunition shipped from Ransom.

Curran was utterly disgusted with the whole affair. "Ten chances to one," said he, "them fellows will never come back to the post, and I'll never get a cent of me money." Curran, as the party most interested, was persistent in his cross-questioning of the major, who was eager enough to explain, but not to Curran. In brief, he said he had brought in that sole-leather valise nearly twelve thousand dollars with which to pay Winthrop's command. The rest of his funds, sealed in his little iron safe, were turned over to the express company to be forwarded to Butte, two days later on, by which time he had expected to return to pay the infantry at the fort and then go on to the outlying posts to the northwest. By evening, too, Rhett had received telegraphic orders to hold his little battalion of foot in readiness to take train to Pawnee and thence march across the range to the lower Mini Ska. Although exaggerated, the reports of rapine and murder were only too true. The Sioux were indeed at their devilish work. In the subdued bustle of preparation the paymaster's excitement and distress of mind created less sympathy than would ordinarily have been the case. Eagerly he was showing his despatch to officer after officer, and asking whether any one would not have acted just as he did under the circumstances and on receipt of so genuine a message, and gentlemen who under other circumstances would unhesitatingly have said yes were now disposed to be a bit conservative, to look judicial and suggest inquiries. Wouldn't it have been better to stop the train at Alkali and see if the report were true? The bridge was only half a mile from the station, and somebody would have been sure to know. These are times when everybody's backsight is so much better than his foresight. Everybody could see with half an eye that had the paymaster caused the conductor to stop the train at Alkali some of the escort would have been on the platform to meet him, and they would have told him that there was nothing in the world the matter with the bridge, that the whole thing was a plant. But Graves pointed out that he didn't own the road and couldn't make the train stop unless he meant to get off, which he didn't. Lieutenant Edwards had wired him to come on to Minden. Everybody knew Edwards. He had escorted Graves on the winter trip to the Black Hills cantonment. It was most natural Edwards should have been selected to escort him this time. He was with the battalion, first lieutenant of Captain Frank Amory's troop. True, as matters turned out, Edwards had not been sent at all. Old Sergeant Daly, with eight troopers, was considered

amply sufficient. Of course it was a plant, a most successful plant, and more than likely, said the paymaster, somebody closely connected with the cavalry had engineered the whole scheme. Everybody knew there were some very shady characters among the men enlisting during the Centennial year. Everybody knew what train would fetch him out from department head-quarters. The plotters would not wire in time to admit of his making inquiries, but waited until the last moment, then, dressed and equipped as the cavalry were dressed and equipped, they had sent two of their number in to Minden Station with a despatch signed by an officer whom they reported a mile or two behind, coming up with the wagon and main body. Everything looked straight to the operator, and so it was sent to Pawnee and there handed to the Pullman porter. What could have been more complete? The troopers who met him at the platform addressed him confidently and respectfully, saluting exactly like old soldiers. Of course he hadn't a personal acquaintance with the entire regiment, but this he would say and did say, that he believed Mr. Lacy, his clerk, was willing to swear that the two men who met him at Minden were *bona fide* members of the Eleventh Cavalry; Mr. Lacy had seen them before, and could identify them if he were to see them again. The sheriff's people were already working on the clue.

It was nearly tattoo that evening when Morgan left the major's and went slowly homeward. Voices in eager conversation were audible in the kitchen as he entered, then became as suddenly still and the door was quickly closed. It was his custom to go to the children's room and kiss and pet them a little after Connie had prompted them through their prayers,—devotions over which, in their infantile depravity, they were far more apt to fall asleep than during the subsequent ceremony. But the sounds from aloft as he entered were those of lively contention rather than adoration, lively controversy rather than the lisping prayers of childish lips. Lot and Billy were still up and astir, it was evident, and so engrossed in their tilt that the father's slow coming up the creaking stairway failed to divert their attention. Halting at the door and looking in, the veteran trooper enjoyed a *coup-d'œil* of the scene. Perched on the bed in the bifurcated vestment of canton flannel referred to as his "nighties" was the burly son and heir, barefooted, flushed, truculent, bouncing up and down on the bed-springs as he conversed with his sister, who, equally flushed, if a trifle less confident in mien, and just about half undressed, was standing with one of her spring-heeled, buttoned boots in hand, half concealed, half disclosed, as though she lacked determination to hurl it after its mate, now reposing on top of the bureau beyond the bed, surrounded by the wreck of a glass toilet-set, once their mother's,—Aunt Lottie's one present to her army sister.

"I don't care," said Lot, sturdily; "you did it."

"Oh, you're worse'n Annanice Afire! I didn't!"

"You did, too! and you shan't call names."

"I shall if you 'cuse me again," said Billy, stoutly. "You fired that shoe at me when I wasn't even lookin' at dolly, and it smashed everything."

"I don't care," reiterated Lot: "it was all your fault. It never would have hit 'em at all if—if you hadn't dodged. So there!" And then Lot, triumphant, turned, saw her father's grave face, and lost her nerve. Running to him, she burst into tears, whereupon Billy began to whimper sympathetically.

"Hush, Lottie. Never mind who did it now," said Morgan, taking her in his arms. "Hush, child. We'll settle that some other time. Where's Connie? Where was she when this happened?"

"Mammy called her to the kitchen. Sergeant Hinkel's wife comed," sobbed Lottie, "and she told Billy not to step on my dolly, and he—just danced it off the bed a purpose, and I—and I——" and here the sobs overmastered her, and Billy came tumbling off his perch in dire dismay. And this was the situation when Connie's low voice and fleet footsteps were heard on the stairway, and Little Mother came hurrying in. One glance told her what had happened. She flew around the bed to the bureau.

"Oh, Lottie, Lottie, how could you?" she cried. "Our dear mother's set,—Aunt Lottie's present!"

"Never mind, Connie, never mind it now, dear. She wasn't aiming at it," said paterfamilias, with his patient smile.

"She was aimin' at me!" burst in Billy, whose distress at sight of Lottie's grief was suddenly tempered by the prospect of her getting off scot-free, as was too often the case when the father administered justice, "and then she said I did it 'cause I dodged."

"Well, he called me names," sobbed Lottie,— "said I was worse'n Annanice Afire."

"What on earth is Annanice Afire?" asked Morgan blankly of his eldest.

"Nothing, father dear. I read them the story of Ananias and Sapphira when Billy told a story the other day. Let me undress Lottie, now.—Come, child."

But Morgan noticed instantly how nervous and flurried was her manner, how tremulous and cold her hand. His little Connie, his big tall Connie now, so tenderly, so fondly loved. Not until the little ones had forgotten their squabble, had begged each other's forgiveness at Connie's knee and cried themselves blissfully to sleep, did the father see her again. She seemed to busy herself a long time aloft instead of coming down to his den. Meantime, Fenton, officer of the day, came hurriedly in:

"Here's the latest, Morgan. Schultz and Schramm took dinner together at Conway's restaurant, leaving their horses at the Empire stable, and didn't start until nearly three o'clock. The sheriff has sent a posse after them. He claims that Lacy's description of the robbers fits them both."

"Blatherskite!" said Morgan.

"Well, that isn't all. Rhett's got a despatch from the chief. We go at daybreak. Special train. You'll be K.O. here to-morrow. The despatch from Pawnee says ranchmen report an officer and his orderly killed and scalped not twenty miles from Painted Lodge. Better come over to the office awhile."

"I'll be there in a minute," said Morgan, rising stiffly. "Connie!" he called at the foot of the stairs. "Connie!"

No answer. Slowly, wonderingly, he climbed the little stairs. Her door was open, the room dark; the night-lamp burning dimly in the children's room threw but a faint beam through the connecting door-way. Groping in, he became aware of something dark upon Connie's white bed. It was his child, her head between the pillows as though to shut out every sound.

"Constance!" he exclaimed, distressed, dismayed. She started up, her hands clasped to her temples. Then, as though overwhelmed with the realization of some haunting dread, she bowed her face upon his arm, quivering from head to foot, and with one low moan of "Papa,"—the old baby name seeming to come most readily to her lips,— "Papa, they've killed him!"—sank back upon the pillow.

VII.

The doctor was needed for Constance that night, and Mrs. Fenton and Mrs. Woods, loving women both, came in to minister to her, so utterly was she unnerved, unstrung. Morgan knew not what to say or think. It was no time now to ask to see the letter she had begged him to read. It was no time to torture her with inquiry as to why the belief in Thornton's death should so utterly prostrate her, even were the belief itself justifiable,—which he did not at all concede. Ranchmen reported an officer and his orderly killed in the Mini Ska valley far to the north of Pawnee Station that evening about dusk. Ranchmen were proverbially sensational. Even if an officer had been killed, why should it be Thornton? True, Winthrop's was the only command in the valley at the moment. True, the Indians knew of their coming, for what movement of troops did they not know all about as soon as the troops themselves? If an officer had been killed, it very possibly was one of the Eleventh. From the landing at the head of the stairs Constance had heard the abrupt announcement of Captain Fenton, and, waiting for no explanation, had rushed to her bed. Why should she believe Thornton to have been the victim? And, even if he were, why should it so affect her?—the apple of his eye, his loving, winsome, loyal Connie, his "Little Mother," as he had so long called her? Morgan wrung his hands in distress and perplexity.

The doctor came in after his brief examination.

"The child has been running down all winter," he said. "She is in a low, nervous condition, the natural result of the long strain. She has had a woman's cares on a child's shoulders, Morgan, and any shock was likely to upset her. The sudden news that one of her friends was killed was quite enough to floor a stronger woman, let alone Connie. We'll have her up again in a day or two; but she ought to have rest and change."

Rest and change! how glibly the words fall! How leaden they light on the ear of husband and father impoverished in the service and bound to the wheel! How was he to offer rest and change to any of

his brood? If rest and change could have saved the life of his beloved wife, how could he have won it for her?

"I've given Constance soothing medicine. Better not disturb her to-night," said the doctor, as he left: so Morgan ventured not to bend over his sleeping child, fearful of breaking the spell. Yet at dawn, when the little battalion of foot marched off to Butte, she was up and at the window, importuning him for latest news from the front. Hours that morning he had to be at the office, for despatches were coming in thick and fast, ordering ordnance stores and ammunition sent hither and yon, and up to noon nothing whatever was heard from Winthrop's command, and the big eyes that questioned him, when he came to kiss Connie's white forehead, were rimmed with mourning circles, as though already she believed him gone and for him mutely wore her weeds. At three P.M. came a despatch from Rhett, six miles out from Pawnee, *en route* for the Mini Ska, dated at twelve: "Report of killing of officer and orderly untrue. Lieutenant Thornton's horse accidentally shot while scouting. No other casualties heard of. Winthrop reported forty miles northeast of Painted Lodge already."

Morgan took this over home at once. Mrs. Woods, bonny little army wife and mother that she was, came from Connie's room, and to her he gave the message. He would not permit any one to think he supposed his child could be, at her tender age, unduly interested in the fate of any man. Yet he found himself listening at the foot of the stairs. Would she cry out in relief and joy? No; whatsoever she might have betrayed to him, Constance was on her guard now. She was her mother's daughter for "pure grit," said he.

"Connie is so glad it wasn't true," called Mrs. Woods, tossing the brown paper down the stairs. "She wants to know when you are coming up to see her?"

"After a while," answered he. "I must go to the storehouse first." He hastened to his stock of arms and munitions of war, thinking little of them, it must be owned,—thinking little of anything just now but Connie. Not yet sixteen, an innocent, ignorant, garrison-bred girl, yet so like her mother in her own girlhood, so gentle, unselfish, thoughtful for others; could it be that all unsought she should have given her girlish heart to the bright-eyed, merry young fellow who had so suddenly left them, and that it was known—noted by others? If not, why should Rhett have taken all the trouble to send that message telling of Thornton's safety? Sorrow, trial, trouble of nearly every kind had come to him during the last year or so, but this was something so utterly unlooked for. What could he do? What should he do?

At the storehouse, the ordnance sergeant, aided by one or two semi-invalided troopers, was packing cavalry equipments to be sent to a distant command. The glad June sunshine was pouring in at the open door-way, and the mountain breeze was fresh and bracing. The men were chatting in low tones over their work, and the talk was only of the robbery. Graves was in town, in consultation with the civil authorities. The local morning paper had but two topics to discuss, the Indian outbreak and the robbery. It had but one theory: the Indians were the malefactors in the first case, and the soldiers in the second.

That cowboys or settlers, ranchmen or road-agents, could be the real culprits was not for an instant to be believed. Two soldiers closely answering the description given by Mr. Lacy, the paymaster's clerk, had been in town for several hours the previous day, patronizing stables, saloons, and restaurants, and liberally supplied with money, had ridden away as soon as details of the robbery were being circulated about the streets, and they were now "at large,"—that expressive term which is used by the press when it desires to imply that the party enjoying his constitutional rights is probably a fugitive from justice. The sheriff, with efficient "posses," was scouring the country in pursuit. Officials at the fort, professing to doubt the evidence laid before them, had refused to co-operate with the civil authorities in securing their arrest, and had insisted that the men were merely returning on the trail of Colonel Winthrop's command. Morgan had read many a screed in similar strain. It was what his own men were saying that aroused him to sudden interest.

"Who was that red-headed chap was out here last night asking to know where was Schramm's trunk?" inquired Private Geohegan of his comrade.

"Oh, he's wan of the sheriff's gang. I misremember his name. Sure the quartermaster-sergeant told him Schramm carried his trunk, like the elephants, on the end of his nose. But he said he knew he'd left a box or trunk in somebody's care,—Mrs. Hinkel's, I think, or the wife of some of the sergeants. He was nosing around the landresses' quarters half the evening."

"Was he? Did he get anything?"

"He did. He got some important information. Mrs. Clancy told him she'd black his eye for him if he stuck his red head inside the door, and while she was entertaining the gentleman Mrs. Hinkel ran up to the post with a box, and when she came back the feller was talking about a search-warrant. It's little of Schramm's they'd find at old Hinkel's now. She's took it up to the officers' quarters, whatever it is."

And then Morgan remembered the eager voice in his kitchen the night before, and Lot's announcement that it was Mrs. Hinkel who begged to see Constance, and a new light flashed across his mind, a new shadow fell athwart his path. What if the authorities were now to ask him where Schramm's effects were hidden? What if they should demand the right to examine them? Morgan was no longer simply a subaltern officer, he was the commander, *pro tem.*, of the big and important post of Fort Ransom, and bound by every consideration to act in conjunction with the civil officials in the enforcement of law and in the aid of civil process.

Even as he was pondering over the matter, a horseman appeared in the broad glare of the sunshine on the bare open space in front.

"I'm looking for the post commander," said he, and handed him a telegram. Morgan mechanically unfolded it and read:

"To the Sheriff, Latimer County, Butteville. Commanding officer Fort Ransom instructed to give every assistance in his power. You will be allowed to make all proper search."

This was signed by the adjutant-general of the department, and

was presently supplemented by another which the operator at the post handed in. He was in conversation with the deputy sheriff at the moment, and, excusing himself, Morgan opened and read:

"Commanding Officer, Fort Ransom. Civil authorities report they are hampered in search for money stolen from Paymaster Graves. Render every assistance and allow all proper investigation."

"Do you mean that your people think any of this money is hidden here at this post?" he queried.

"Well, sir, that's what some of 'em say. Two of our officers will be out here in a moment. I rode ahead while they were jogging along in their buggy. They were here last night, and Mrs. Hinkel was seen toting a box up into the post just as soon as she heard they were inquiring for her shanty."

Morgan turned away. Far out across the winding ribbon of the road, twisting and twining over the rolling surface of the prairie, he could see the black dots in the light dust-cloud that told of the rapid approach of the officers of the law. Officially he had no knowledge of the whereabouts of that box, nor even of its existence; personally he had now every reason to believe that it was secreted under his own roof. Confident of Schramm's innocence, he had faith that nothing criminating could be found in Schramm's belongings. But suppose that the box contained papers,—personal and family documents which dealt with nobody's business but his own. What right had they to turn his letters inside out, possess themselves of his secrets, and parade them in the columns of the press, as paraded they certainly would be? It was an embarrassing question.

"What gave rise to the suspicion that Schramm had left valuables in the hands of Mrs. Hinkel?" he asked.

"Oh, that was easy to find out," answered the civilian. "All the soldiers, all the laundresses, were full of information about Schramm, and the mere fact that he held aloof from all but a few of their number was sufficient to make them suspicious of those with whom he did associate. Mrs. Hinkel and Mrs. Schultz were sisters, I am told, and Schultz and Schramm became very friendly. Schramm, it appears, spent many an evening at Hinkel's, and took a box there when the battalion was packing for the field, and went there with a small bundle the moment he got in from the front, the morning of the robbery. Now we know just what those two men did in town, and what we want to find out is what they did out here, what that packet was and what became of it. To-morrow we expect to have the men themselves."

"You do? Where?"

"Oh, well, down the Ska somewhere. They doubtless think that the safest route. You see, they couldn't go in any other direction without their being headed off and its being open admission of their guilt. Possibly they mean to catch the regiment, go through the campaign with it, and by and by, when the thing has blown over, pull out the money that they've hidden whereabouts, and have a good time. We have two parties out after them now: one, to head them off, went down to Pawnee by rail and rode north from there; the other follows their trail. I suppose you know we found the valise?"

"No. Where?"

"On the north bank of the river, not more than a mile west of Minden, sliced open with a bowie and rifled of whatever paper money there was in it originally. Nothing else was taken, so the paymaster and clerk say. They even left the nickels and dimes. Evidently they were in a big hurry."

Morgan's sad eyes wandered again over the prairie. The buggy was not a mile away, and another was following. If he could only see Mrs. Hinkel a moment before the inquisitors came. "Sudsville," that bustling suburb of the army post of those days, nestled along under the bank of a little tributary of the Mini Ska, while the cavalry stables and corrals occupied the broad low ground that skirted the stream itself on the southward side of the garrison. He had known the woman for years. She was an honest, sturdy, stout-hearted "frau," devoted to her husband, the Hanoverian sergeant, and proud of her brother-in-law, the Prussian Schultz, whose wife had died some years before. She held herself above the run of the colony of soldiers' wives, therefore they were not as ready to lie for as against her. Nevertheless, she had won even their respect; but the gabble of the laundresses' quarters had been amply sufficient to direct the scrutiny of the officials to her doors. Schramm, who left the box with her when the battalion marched, had left also a small package with her the morning he and Schultz rode in. Where were box and packet, and what did they contain? That was what the sheriff was determined to find out, and so certain was he of being on the trail of the robbers that he had bidden Graves and his clerk to follow and identify the money that might be recovered. When Morgan saw the occupants of the second buggy, as they drove in by the south gate, he went straight to his quarters.

"Is Constance asleep?" he asked of Mrs. Woods, as she met him at the stairs.

"No; she's awake, and anxious to see you," was the answer.

Still undetermined what to do, the father slowly climbed the steep stairway. Oh, how fondly and trustfully the big eyes beamed upon him, as he tiptoed in! Already his child was looking better, almost happy. She stretched forth her arms as he bent to kiss her.

"Dear old daddy! All the worry seems to come to you now, and Connie's forbidden to get up and help you. Is there any further news—of the robbery, I mean?"

"Yes." Then he paused a moment. "Constance, dear, the civil authorities claim that they know the robbers,—that they are of our regiment and that we are shielding them. The general orders me to aid in the search. They say Mrs. Hinkel had a box which belonged to Schramm and contains now some of the stolen money. What box did she bring you last night?"

"Schramm's box, father, and begged me not to let it go. It contains no stolen money. It holds papers and personal——" But he interrupted her.

"No matter what it may hold, we cannot hold it now. I do not blame Mrs. Hinkel for fetching it to you, but I must have it and the key."

"The box is in the lower drawer of the bureau, father. I have no key at all; Schramm has that. I did not tell you, because we knew that if you were questioned about it you would have to tell the truth, and then poor Schramm's letters would be no longer sacred."

"They shall touch none of his letters if I can help it," said Morgan, "but they must be allowed to examine for themselves."

A quarter of an hour later, in the office of the commanding officer were Graves and his clerk, the sheriff and a deputy, Morgan and the post surgeon, the latter officer having been summoned at Morgan's request. On the table was a stout sole-leather case about two feet long and six inches deep, shaped something like a despatch-box, something like a valise. It was evidently of foreign make, strong, durable, yet showing signs of service and wear. Such name as had originally been painted on its end was long since carefully scraped and painted out. In addition to its straps, a strong brass clasp and padlock secured it.

"It seems a pity to burst such a lock and spoil such a case," said the doctor, gravely. "I suppose you gentlemen feel that it must be done?"

"Oh, I never had a straighter tip in my life," said the sheriff. "I am betting on finding important evidence right here, if not the swag itself."

A soldier entered with some tools.

"One moment now, gentlemen," said Morgan. "This box is the property of a comparatively new soldier of ours. I believe he occupied higher station abroad than here. If money be found herein, well and good, I've nothing to say; but I protest against any prying into his personal secrets. This isn't Russia."

But the very first thing lifted out of the leathern box, as, its clasp shattered, it lay open before their eyes, was a long, official envelope. The sheriff tore it open, and therein lay ten fifty-dollar bills, national currency, crisp and new.

"My God!" exclaimed Lacy, pale with excitement. "I believe I could almost swear that those are some of the very bills we drew from the First National."

"Do you ordinarily pay enlisted men in fifty-dollar bills, Mr. Lacy?" asked Morgan.

"Certainly not," was the prompt reply. "There were over twenty officers with Colonel Winthrop's battalion: so we brought a thousand in one-hundreds and two thousand in fifties." And Lacy counted the bills over again with trembling fingers. The sheriff's big red hands were dragging out other packets now, bundle after bundle of letters, old, faded, and stained, several little books in German, three or four parcels wrapped in silk, each of which, when unrolled, proved to contain portraits. One of a soldierly, gray-moustached man of fifty-five or thereabouts, in the conventional broad-breasted undress uniform of the German army. Another,—on ivory, this, and in costly frame,—a painting of a lovely face with deep blue eyes and a fond, tender smile about the lips,—a mother face, which appeared again, with more of silver and less of gold in the curling hair that framed it, in two or three photographs. There was a photograph, too, of a stalwart young

lieutenant in the dress of the Uhlans. Another, a boy not more than eighteen or nineteen, in the uniform of the foot-guards, with the iron cross on his breast. There was a sword-knot or two, and then some documents, closely written in German, filed, docketed, and trimly wrapped, and these, one after another, the sheriff was searching through and swearing over because he couldn't understand them, when again Morgan interposed :

"There's no more money there, Mr. Sheriff. Surely there's no reason for prying into the man's family affairs. When the arrest is made that will be time enough. You've got what money there is. Kindly give me a memorandum receipt for that, and then seal the case up again. I say again, I'm ready to bet anything both Schultz and Schramm will be able to account for every moment and every dollar. All you have to do now is to get them, which your deputies can effect as soon as they reach the regiment."

And, seeing how much Morgan seemed to take the matter to heart and that the officers evidently agreed with him, the sheriff finally consented :

"All right ; only we've got to take this with us. We ought to hear through Pawnee from the parties sent to make the arrest by to-morrow night."

And hear they did, late the next evening. The party sent out from Pawnee rode north to the Mini Ska until they struck the cavalry trail near Painted Lodge, then followed the battalion on to camp. Schultz and Schramm had neither been seen nor heard of by the battalion since they were sent back from Bear Fork.

VIII.

It was on a Wednesday morning that Old Tintop marched away from Ransom. It was on Friday morning at dawn that the robbery occurred at Minden, Friday at guard-mounting that Schultz and Schramm reached the post, Friday noon that the news of the robbery came to Major Rhett, by which time the two couriers were again up and away, going, as we have seen, to have a quiet dinner by themselves in town before starting to return to their detachment. Fanning, proprietor of the Empire stables, said they had unsaddled in his corral about half-past twelve, had told him to feed at four, as they purposed starting in the cool of the evening ; but they came back hurriedly just before three, saddled up, paid their reckoning, and left. He knew Schultz well ; the other was a stranger, twenty years younger. Conway, keeper of the thriving restaurant, said the sergeant and his friend came in about one. He knew Schultz well also, and Schultz ordered a good dinner to be served, with a bottle of Rhine wine, as soon as convenient. They were shown to the curtained alcove at the rear end of the house, farthest from the bar, and were waited upon by the Mongolian combination cook and waiter. Meantime, everybody coming into the bar was talking of the robbery, and finally about half-past two Conway went himself to the box occupied by the Germans, and told

them the news. They got up at once, left their wine and coffee unfinished, and hastened out to get further particulars. A few minutes after three they were seen riding briskly away on the Minden road, north of the river. It was Saturday morning when the sheriff's officers were sent in pursuit, one party going by rail to Pawnee, as has been said, then taking horses and riding over to the lower valley of the Ska; the other followed the trail. On Sunday evening members of both parties met near Painted Lodge, one coming back from the command to report that Schultz and Schramm were not there and hadn't been there, the other riding eastward hard as they could to catch the malefactors whom they believed still ahead of them. Between the two the Germans had slipped out somewhere and gone none could say whither.

When Monday evening came there was news indeed. Tintop, by a forced march, had jumped between the Sioux raiding-parties and the agency, whither the renegades were now returning, and there had been a battle to the death. The fight had come off somewhere among the breaks on the north side of the Ska Sunday afternoon, ninety miles from the agency and a hundred from the nearest railway-station. The news came from Indian sources entirely, but neither agent, interpreter, mission priests, nor soldier guards could tell by what means they got the tidings, and no Indian or half-bred *would* tell. That they believed it authentic was evident from the wails and lamentations of certain bereaved squaws. All the agent could telegraph was that a collision had occurred and the losses were heavy on both sides. Tuesday morning dawned with no further particulars worthy of credence. But when No. 3 came in for breakfast at Butte, Colonel Rand, inspector-general of the department, stepped briskly off and inquired for despatches at the office of the hotel. Receiving several, he was shown at once to Major Graves's room.

With the paymaster at the moment were the sheriff and a brace of reporters. Mr. Lacy was away on some mysterious errand which was to result, so it was said, in the recovery of a large portion of the stolen funds. He had been gone since Sunday night. Rand thoughtfully read his telegrams as he mounted the stairs. The bell-boy's rap was answered by the sheriff, who was seated nearest the door, a proceeding at which Graves reddened; it smacked of proprietorship, an indefinable air of authority and possession on the part of the sheriff having become more and more noticeable to the paymaster ever since their visit to Ransom. It galled him, yet was manifested in so intangible a way he knew not how to resent it. The fact of the matter was, Graves didn't know how to do anything when Lacy was away. He had been in service only a year, despite his gray beard, and was the nominee of a man to whom neither Executive nor Senate could afford to say nay. He simply leaned upon Lacy, who for his part was unquestionably one of the ablest and most accomplished assistants a government official could expect to have.

"What do you want?" said the sheriff, gruffly. "Nobody rang."

"Don't want nawthin'," was the answer, as the boy's eyes wandered past the bulky form which was too familiar to be of interest, and

sought out the party who had been "held up." "There's a feller here askin' for Graves," he proceeded,—the use of a handle to a man's name being regarded in many far Western communities at that day as a virtual admission of personal inferiority. The paymaster heard his name and hastened to the door. Rand, swinging coolly along the corridor, reading his despatches, glanced up, gave no sign of recognition of the sheriff, but held out his hand to Graves, whose face lighted with relief and hope at sight of the staff-officer.

"Come right in, colonel," he exclaimed. "I'm mighty glad to see you. I've been hoping you'd come. My God! did you ever hear of a more perfect plant? Come in; I want to talk with you."

"Had your breakfast?" asked Rand, briefly, and barely glancing at the other occupants.

"Not yet. I—haven't much appetite to speak of, and these gentlemen came up to see me the first thing. Let me present——"

"Well, come and take breakfast with me, then. I'm hungry as a wolf, and I can't talk until later," interposed Rand.

"All right, colonel; I'll go with you in a minute. As I was saying, the sheriff and these gentlemen——" again indicating his friends.

"Don't let me intrude now, Graves. I'll order for two. Finish your business with your friends, and then join me as soon as you can." And, before the paymaster could present the sheriff or introduce anybody else, Rand whirled about and went striding slowly down the corridor, engrossed apparently in another despatch.

"Give me my old room, if you can," said he at the office, "and order breakfast for two at once. Give us a little table by ourselves: I'll be back here in ten minutes."

The colonel was not in sight when Graves, still accompanied by the sheriff and the correspondents, came down to the office. Nor did he reappear in the hall. Graves, nervous, anxious, and fretful, kept glancing at the main entrance, and finally led his faithful attendants to the porch without. Here they could command a view of the street both ways. In fifteen minutes a waiter came out to say that Major Graves's breakfast was getting cold, and the other gentleman was half through his'n; wanted to know if the major's friends wouldn't excuse him long enough to let him come in and get a bite. The correspondents saw through the scheme and took it all laughingly. The sheriff said he'd go with him. Rand looked neither surprised nor annoyed when the big fellow came bulging in. He bowed civilly, but continued his engrossing work of tearing a territorial chicken to shreds, simply saying they must excuse his apparent haste, he had had no supper the night before and a long day's work was ahead and he was ravenous. The sheriff grimly watched the well-known officer (every town and settlement in the department knew the general's right-hand adviser, Rand), and twice essayed to open talk on the subject of the robbery. Rand listened with every manifestation of polite interest, but vouchsafed not a word of his own. Suddenly pushing back his chair and tossing his napkin thereon as he rose, he said,—

"Now excuse me, major; finish your breakfast, and I'll write a letter or two. Join me in the office as soon as you're ready."

Of course Graves was ready in three minutes, and the sheriff also. Rand looked up, nodded cheerily, and went on with his letters. These he presently read over, folded, addressed, and stamped, with easy deliberation, and by this time the correspondents rejoined the major. Rand glanced at his watch, picked up his letters and took them to the desk. Graves and party followed. Then out came Rand's big cigar-case.

"Smoke?" he said, tendering the bunch to the sheriff, who pulled one forth in his pudgy fingers while Graves was presenting Messrs. So-and-So, of such and such papers, to both of whom Rand extended cordial greeting and his cigar-case, then took Graves by the arm, nodded cheerily a good-day to the party, and popped the paymaster through a side door. For an instant, only, they were too surprised to act. Then, with a "Well, I'll be damned!" the sheriff jumped to the door. There at the side entrance stood Fanning's best bay team and open buggy, Graves just being hoisted in. Rand sprang lightly after him, and, without a vestige of triumph on his face, blithely waved his hand to the party at the door, and away went the bays and the buggy.

"Well," said the sheriff, "if he isn't a cool one may I be—double damned!"

Not until afternoon could he, or any one else, for that matter, get at either Rand or Graves. Making a long circuit, and keeping him in constant chat, the colonel drove the unhappy paymaster out over the hard prairie roads, and towards noon reined up at the fort, where the team was turned over to an orderly, and the two staff-officers were welcomed by Morgan and regaled with lunch. Rand swore the canned lobster and commissary crackers and cheese, washed down with Budweiser, the most delicious things he ever tasted, and was full of sympathy with Morgan in his anxiety about Connie.

"Here's what you've got to do, old fellow," said he. "You must let that brave little woman come and pay us a visit. Send Lot and Billy, too. I've got a great big house, and my wife will be only too glad to hear child voices in it again. I like Connie. She's a brick. I'll send passes for the whole party, and the change will do her good. Now, speaking about Schramm: had he never told her about his antecedents?"

No, Morgan knew he hadn't. So later Rand went down to see Mrs. Hinkel, and thus it happened that he was still at the fort when along about three P.M. the wires began to warm up with other and graver matter. Rand was wanted at the instrument if by chance he was still at the fort, for it was necessary that he should be placed in immediate communication with the general, who was at department head-quarters, and presently the soldier operator's cheek began to pale, as he checked off and jotted down, name after name, the list of the killed and wounded in Tintop's daring fight against the combined war-parties of the reservations. The gallant old dragoon himself was safe, but Morgan's captaincy had come. The flag went down to half-staff unrebuked by the lonely officer in command, for brave Manning, his long-time troop-leader and friend, had fallen fighting hard. The list of the dead, though large, was exceeded by that of the wounded, and

supplemented by that of a party of whose fate no man could hazard more than mere conjecture. In addition to the names of Schultz and Schramm were those of ten other troopers reported among the missing. It was the roster of a little detachment sent out on the trail of alleged road-agents or robbers. They had started only a few hours before the fight, and were under the leadership of Lieutenant Thornton.

IX.

A special engine and car took Rand, the doctor, and certain hospital attendants eastward to Pawnee that evening, but meantime, on his return to town, the colonel had gracefully surrendered to the press. He had so much to tell about the action of Winthrop's command that it left little room for his views or theories as to the robbery. He won the hearts of the correspondents by offering to take them along with him and tell them all he could on the way, and thus get time to look into certain other matters with which he was charged. He asked the sheriff for a description of the bills found in Schramm's box, and the sheriff allowed him to see the packet and make memoranda for himself. He asked to see Mr. Lacy. In fact, he asked twice to see Mr. Lacy; but, though that gentleman had returned to the hotel at noon, he could not be found. He had gone out again after hearing that the major was driving somewhere with Colonel Rand. Up to the minute the special was reported ready, Mr. Lacy did not reappear, and when it was time to start Rand told the telegraph operator to send the following:

"BUTTE, Tuesday, 5.30 P.M.

"GENERAL C——, on No. 3:

"Just starting for Pawnee. No news here of Thornton's party. Rhett's battalion escorting wounded. Shall push forward to Mini Ska to-night. Ordered Graves to return with clerk to head-quarters by next train. Funds in safe by express. Shall stop to question Minden."

The run to Minden along the level valley was made in thirty minutes, and the agent was on the platform, a green flag hanging from the signal-arm overhead. The engineer, therefore, had orders to stop anyhow. A little knot of loungers had gathered, and with genuine frontier curiosity swarmed about the colonel as he took and opened the telegrams awaiting him. He read as he moved to the door of the station, and some of the party prepared to do likewise. Once inside the office, however, Rand shut and snapped the door behind him and turned on the agent:

"You were ordered, I believe, to send a written description of the two men who came to you with a despatch for Paymaster Graves and lured him on here Friday morning last. Have you done it?"

"Yes, sir. Sent it up to Mr. Burke at Butte to-day,—the division superintendent. I couldn't describe much. You see, it was still darkish, although—at least it was kind of dark in here, though it was after dawn outside. They wore their slouch-hats down low, and their

collars up. I didn't suspect anything. They were both bearded, and in the prime of life, I should say,—about thirty, perhaps. Looked as much like soldiers as any I've ever seen, out here, leastwise."

"Do you think you'd know 'em again?"

"Well, no, sir; to be frank, I don't. I didn't notice them particularly. They were so quiet, had so little to say. Only one of them spoke to me at all,—gave his message right out soldier-fashion, and said he was instructed to notify the lieutenant of the time it was wired. I sent it right off quick as I could get Pawnee, and then they went out again, leaving me at the desk. When they came back, just as the train hove in sight, although it was broad daylight I was paying attention to the train and not to them,—hardly heard a word, or more than even glanced at them, when No. 3 came in. I saw a little clump of men over by the stream watering their horses, and all had on army overcoats. These two fellows who met the paymaster were the ones that first came in; I'm certain as to that."

"Are you? Well, why? What was there to make you certain?"

"Because the fellow that did the talking used good English,—better than most soldiers,—and he ordered the other fellow around. The other called him 'sergeant,' the time he spoke."

"Good English, eh? Out-and-out Yankee, do you mean? or plains English, or Boston English? At all events, it sounded like a Yankee talking, not a foreigner, didn't it,—a German, for instance?" said Rand, eying him keenly.

"Well, now you speak of it, colonel, the fellow called sergeant had just a little accent,—German-like. But I mean he didn't use slang nor cuss words. He talked what we call book English."

"And you thought him only thirty?"

"Certainly not more than that. He looked so light and spry. But he had a pretty heavy beard. It covered all his face."

"No sprinkle of gray in it?"

"Well, sir, not that I noticed in that light."

"Where did they leave their horses, and what were the horses like,—bays? sorrels? chestnuts?"

"I didn't see their mounts at all, sir, except in a clump at a distance. They seemed mixed colors then."

"Exactly. Not all one color, as they would be if they belonged to one troop of cavalry,—bays, or sorrels, or grays?"

"Well, they were a good way off, colonel, and I can't be certain. Mr. Long, here, saw two men riding up along the north bank not more than twenty minutes after No. 3 pulled out."

"Yes. What colored horses were those two riding, Mr. Long?"

"Roans, sir. I could see plainly in the slanting sunshine. Clean-limbed little fellows, too. They were no plugs or bronchos. They were genuine cavalry horses."

Rand compressed his bearded lips, as he turned away, signalling to the conductor, "Go ahead."

That evening a little party pushed away northward from the quartermaster's field dépôt, established close to the railway-station at Pawnee. A long ride was ahead of them, as the doctor was sorely

needed. About the same hour, over in the Mini Ska valley, Rhett had pitched his few tents and posted his sentries and outlying pickets to guard the wounded and the helpless against possibility of Indian attack. True, Indians of the plains rarely attack at night, and are scary and superstitious as so many negroes. True, the hostiles were all back under the wing of the agency by this time, probably. But Rhett had never before been on Indian service, and, whether he had or not, determined to neglect no precaution. He had met the convoy returning from the scene of the fight, had relieved the cavalry guard, sending it back to overtake the battalion,—now fourscore miles away *en route* to a still more threatened point,—and, under the orders flashed after him by wire and swift courier, Rhett was coming back to Pawnee, bringing the sufferers with him. The killed had been buried, temporarily at least, at the scene of the savage fight. There were thirty wounded in his care, borne mostly on travois and drawn by captured Indian ponies. When he halted at the end of his day's march Painted Lodge Butte bore southwest by west perhaps fifteen miles away, and the stage-station at the bridge over the Mini Ska lay probably five miles from their up-stream picket. A group of officers, chatting in low tones around the camp-fire among the cottonwoods, dispersed about ten P.M., and all but the commander of the guard rolled into their blankets, one or two of the number enjoying a good-night whiff at their brier-roots as they stretched themselves on the sod. Beyond the heavy breathing of some sleeper and occasionally a feverish moan among the wounded, who, with their attendants, were sheltered in a little hollow out of reach of possible shot, the camp was very quiet. The few horses, the mules and Indian ponies were securely hopped and guarded where they could graze at will on a bench just to the north of camp, and when the moon came riding up the eastern sky and faintly picturing the bluff-bordered valley, the scene was one of calm and placid repose. Fenton, the officer of the day, could not help remarking upon it, as he went trudging out over the grassy slope for a midnight visit to his pickets. They had been talking of the strange and successful scheme by which the outlaws had lured the paymaster on to Minden and there robbed him, for the theory of the civil authorities that cavalymen alone were the perpetrators had received something of a set-back when these gentlemen from Ransom met the wounded and the guards from Tintop's command and learned that the only absentees at the time of the robbery were Schultz and Schramm, who could hardly have effected it by themselves; and what opportunity had they had of learning the paymaster's movements? True, the sheriff's people, unable to find out what had become of the two, forbidden to invade the confines of another Territory, which they would do if they followed the cavalry, afraid to linger in the valley after the cavalry had gone, and utterly averse to searching among the Sioux trails for their prey, had returned to the railway. Among the wounded was Lieutenant Edwards, the paymaster's friend, and no one was more interested about this affair in which his name had been so recklessly and effectively misused than Edwards himself. The young doctor with the wounded told him he mustn't talk so much, but Edwards was bound to find out

all he could, and so it happened that this very night, catching sight of the officer of the day as he started out on his rounds, Edwards feebly hailed him, on the shallow pretence that he had something to tell.

"Say, cap., I wanted to ask you if you knew we were just about opposite the gap that Thornton and his fellows took to pursue those road-agents?"

"Certainly. They went right up over yonder," said Fenton, pointing to where, dim and shadowy, a ravine seemed to pierce, wedge-like, the barrier of the northward range. "But what do you mean by lying awake and asking conundrums when you ought to be asleep?"

"Because I'm a damned sight more interested in old Graves's predicament than I am in our own, though I may yet have to convince a vigilant treasury that some other fellow, not I, sent that despatch. We were only some twenty miles east of here when that courier caught us with the news of the thing and the statement that the gang had scattered, some coming our way. The courier himself saw two of them, he said, as he came across the bridge, far up across the prairie, riding for Wagon Gap for all they were worth. Then he sneaked over and struck the trail and said that not two but six, at least, had gone to the Gap. That's how Thornton came to be sent back with orders to pursue and punish, capture, recover, and all manner of things that Tintop knew perfectly well he couldn't do, yet had to order him in compliance with his own instructions. He must have ridden right across the line of flight of the Sioux we whipped on Sunday, and, if so, God help him and his! There's nothing left of 'em but wolf-bait now."

"Oh, you're a little used up, Edwards. They'll squeeze through all right, I think. Quit your talking, and go to sleep."

"I can't sleep. 'Tisn't that this hole hurts me so, or that I'm so thirsty, but I can't get that confounded business out of my head, and I'm worried about Thornton."

"Well, shut up," said the captain. "Listen." And he stood holding out a warning hand.

"What do you hear?" asked Edwards, presently.

"I can't hear anything, thanks to your clatter. I thought I heard a challenge 'way up-stream where our picket is. Do be quiet now."

Both men listened with strained ears. Over at the edge of the bench to the northeast where the drowsy animals were scattered, a slowly-pacing sentry had halted, turned about, and, with the moon-beams glinting on his rifle, he too was listening, as though his attention had been attracted by some sound on the up-stream side of the camp.

"What was it, Lucas?" asked the officer of the day, coming up out of the hollow where the wounded were lying.

"I don't know, sir. The noise off yonder awhile ago was coyotes, but this cry came from up the bank."

"So I thought. It sounded like a challenging sentry. Who are out there?"

"Corporal Rafferty, sir, and two of B Company. I couldn't see anything, yet about ten minutes ago six or eight of them mules were pricking up their ears and looking out across that stretch of prairie yonder like as though they'd seen or smelt something."

The captain waited no longer. Turning away from the sentry, he walked rapidly out upon the bench which overlooked the river-bottom. Up here the moon illumined his way, while underneath the low crest there were fallen cottonwoods and more or less jungle and tangle to trip over. A camp sentry, well hidden under the bank, waited until his senior was close at hand, then challenged in muffled tone.

"Have you heard anything unusual off yonder?" asked the officer of the day as soon as he had been formally advanced and recognized.

"There's voices out there, sir, and horses. Rafferty's party has got 'em, whoever it is."

Presently two horsemen, piloted by a soldier afoot, came slowly through the timber towards them.

"Don't challenge," said Captain Fenton. "I'll hail.—What have you there, corporal?" he sharply asked, when the party had come within a dozen yards.

"That you, cap.?" queried a voice with the Western twang in it. "Good Lord, but I'm glad to git yere! We've ridden seventy-five likely miles since morning, and ain't had a drink for twenty-four hours. Say, any of our other fellows yere? We're the posse sent out from Butte."

"Oh! I thought you'd given up and gone home," said Fenton, shortly, disappointed somehow that it was not a courier.

"Well, we did start, till we got word of Lieutenant Thornton's striking the trail, then we turned round and followed him. Luckily, the Sioux headed us off."

"Why luckily?"

"Good Lord! ain't you heard? The lieutenant and his men were corralled up at Slaughter Cove. I don't reckon there's hide nor hair of any of 'em left by this time, 'cept what the Indians have got on their scalp-belts."

"Slaughter Cove, man! why, that's not more than thirty miles north of us,—through the Gap."

"That's all true, perhaps, but we had to ride around a whole county to work our way out. The Sioux have got the swag by this time, robbers, troopers, and all."

X.

A proud boy was Perry Thornton the night the details of the robbery reached them. Finding no paymaster at Willow Springs on Friday noon, and alarmed by reports of Indian outrages down the Mini Ska, Tintop, as has been seen, decided to push on for Painted Lodge as soon as men and horses had enjoyed an hour of nooning; and so by sunset of the long June day the cavalry had put some forty-three miles to their credit and gone into camp once more, close to the stream, and not more than ten miles from the bridge over which was carried the broad and once well-beaten trail from Pawnee to the

agency. Thornton, eager to win his spurs, and being a prime favorite with Tintop, as indeed he was with everybody, had been accorded the bliss of a side-scout, and was sent over to the stage-station at the bridge to gather news. There was no difficulty in loading up with rumors. The air was full of them. Perry found at the station half a dozen cowboys, ranchmen, and the like, most of whom had escaped by the skin of their teeth and the performance of prodigies of personal valor. The old telegraph-line from Pawnee to the station was intact, but north through Wagon Gap and so on to the agency there had been no communication for a week, and no one was venturesome enough to go out and discover why. Around by way of Bismarck and Yankton it was easy, though slow work, to communicate with the agency people, and the situation warranted the belief that the Sioux had slashed the wires running southward from their reservation, and therefore towards the railway and the coming soldiers, but had left the northeastward passage open, under the natural impression that no tidings could ever get to the enemy by a road that ran the opposite way. Perry was urged by his informants to get back to camp and bring up the cavalry, and had not gone a mile before the accident happened which led to the shooting of the horse he was riding. The telegraph company, thinking to be enterprising, had sent a young man out with an instrument only the day before, and reopened the old office at Ska Bridge station, and when a cowboy came running in to say the lieutenant and his party had been jumped on the way back to Painted Lodge the despatch was sent at once which so alarmed the good folk at Ransom and which Rhett found means to modify on the following day; by which time, however, the truth was learned at Ska Bridge, as the cavalry battalion, "going for all it was worth," passed on downstream in a cloud of alkali-dust. Perry was ready for another ride even after a long day's march when, late Saturday night, as they slept far down the Ska, a courier rode in from the stage-station behind with full particulars of the robbery and the news that some of the gang were unquestionably striving to escape towards the Indian agency to the north, and had been seen spurring through Wagon Gap. The telegraph operator at the station had told Old Tintop all that he knew of the affair during the brief moment that the colonel halted, but now despatches and authentic news came after them.

"We've got to send an officer and ten men on the trail of those beggars," said Tintop, sitting up in his blankets and reading by the light of Gray's lantern. "Whose turn is it?"

"Mine, colonel," sang out a cheery voice from a roll of bedding under an opposite cottonwood, and in a moment Thornton, fresh as a daisy, was pulling on his boots and girding himself for the ride.

"You've just got back, you young cub, and the horse you killed was worth the news you brought ten times over," growled the colonel.

"Well, that's why I want to have another go, sir," was the prompt, laughing answer. And Tintop would not say him nay.

It was this way that Thornton came to miss the stirring fight of the battalion on the Sunday noontide, and to stumble into a siege of his own beside which, in point of peril and pluck and long-continued

strain, the fierce, brief hour of battle of his comrades was but a bagatelle.

At one A.M. on Sunday he and his little squad rode away on the westward trail, guided by the couriers who brought the news. Two miles back from camp they left the river and edged away to their right over the moonlit valley towards a rift in the boundary hills just faintly visible in the dim and ghostly light. An hour after dawn they halted in a deep ravine to water their horses, and then went loping on again, Thornton eager and exultant, proud of his trust and determined to overhaul the robbers if riding could do it. By noon Sunday they had pushed northward out of the Gap with the fresh trail leading on; by one had halted to feed, water, and unsaddle awhile in the midst of the wild scenery at the head of Fossil Creek, the ten-mile pass out of sight behind and the rocky walls of Slaughter Cove no great distance ahead. It was here that Sergeant Jeffers, instead of lying down and resting, as did the others, was seen bending double and examining the tracks of their predecessors all along the bank and among the trees. Wherever a horse had stepped in the mud and the hoof-print remained unbroken he bent closer and studied it with mingled interest and anxiety. At last Thornton, watching him as he munched his bit of hard bread and chocolate, took his tin mug to the brook for a drink and turned on the non-commissioned officer.

"What are you studying so closely, sergeant?"

"These hoof-prints, sir. There are two I've seen this morning that worried me at first, in view of the charge made that the robbers were cavalrymen."

"Why so?"

"Just this, sir. Two of these horses we're after wear the government cavalry shoe. Look here, and here. I could almost swear those shoes were fitted and every nail driven and clinched by D Troop's farrier."

"And do you mean that some of our fellows are actually mixed up in the robbery, after all? Why, man alive, there's no one out but Schultz and Schramm."

"That's just exactly what I don't believe, sir, if by being mixed up in the matter the lieutenant means they belong to the gang. No, sir; for the last hour it has been dawning on me that we are not following one party, but two. An Indian would have told us this before now. The first party went through the Gap hours ahead of the second, and we're as many hours behind. The first party probably were the road-agents; the second, chasing as hard as they could, were Schultz and Schramm."

"How do you make it out?" asked Thornton, his bright eyes ablaze with interest.

"Well, everywhere through the Gap, lieutenant, these cavalry hoof-prints showed atop of the others. In every case where there was soft ground you could see that our print was the last made. The first party camped here, fed, watered, ate, and smoked, and finally went on; our fellows merely fed and watered and hastened after them. You can see where their horses were tethered, where the cooking was done,

where they lay and smoked. Some of them had cigars. I picked up three stumps. Our fellows never stopped more than to give their horses what grain they had left in their nose-bags, and a good long drink. It was Schultz and Schramm, simply because they alone were away from the command. They had gained on the gang considerably, too, through the halt of the former right here, and I believe we'll hear from them yet."

Two hours later, pushing on in grim determination still on the trail, with the opening of the strange, wild, heavily-timbered rift in the hills named but the previous summer Slaughter Cove, just to their left, the party rode suddenly out from among the pines to where a bare, treeless shoulder of the mountains towered between them and the east. Northward up a steep ascent among scattered timber went the trail, and Thornton and Jeffers dismounted to lead and rest their panting horses. The others in silence followed their example. Slowly they clambered up the winding path, each moment nearing the crest, and at last within half a dozen yards of the top Jeffers signalled with his bare brown hand, tossed his reins to the nearest trooper, and then, bending low and removing his scouting-hat, went crouching towards a little cairn of stone, an old Indian guide-post made to keep their runners from losing the way in the depths of a Dakota winter, when all the face of nature was veiled in snow. One after another as they closed up on the leaders the weary men halted, and some at once threw themselves upon the sod; all allowed their horses to graze. For a moment Jeffers lay flat, peering over the crest; then of a sudden he seemed to catch sight of something that set him all of a quiver. He shaded his eyes with his hand and stared, slowly rising to his feet, the muscles of his lips and jaws twitching with suppressed excitement. Thornton, busily engaged at the moment in opening the case of his field-glass, did not at first see him. Just as he had drawn out the binocular and wiped the object-glass with a silken handkerchief, one of the troopers muttered, "Look, lieutenant, he's beckoning." And in a moment, with beating heart, the boy had crept to the veteran's side.

It was a wonderful view that opened before his eyes. They were halted on the eastward slope of a bold, rock-ribbed, pine-covered range that seemed to stretch away northward without pass or break for many a league until lost in a maze of similar black-crested heights that, perhaps forty miles away, veered around to the east again, curtaining the intervening slopes and foot-hills and valleys until it was merged in the general haze of the far eastern horizon. All the rude, rugged chain of hills bristled with its growth of pine and cedar, glistened here and there with its outcropping of boulder and quartz, or glinted when the searching sunshine fell on the duller hues of gneiss and granite. All the rolling foot-hills, a tumbling sea of spotless green, shimmered in the unclouded rays. Far as the eye could reach, northeast, east, southeastward again, a glorious stretch of upland prairie, of wind-swept, woodless turf, once the roaming-ground of countless thousands of the wild cattle of the Western world, the now annihilated buffalo. Far away to the southeast, dim and indistinct, a dark winding fringe told where the Mini Ska rolled smoothly through its wide and open

valley. Far away to the northeast, among rounded bluffs and palisaded buttes, a shining blue ribbon turned and twisted, dove out of sight under grass-grown walls, only to come gleaming into view again still farther on, the Wakpa Wakon,—Spirit River,—curling through the heart of the reservation, the sacred lands of the Sioux. There, somewhere to the north, sheltered from the fierce wintry gales by the grand curtain of bearded mountain to its west and north, hidden from sight by its surrounding citadels of bluff, lay the substantial settlement of the agency, a long day's march away. There in every deep sequestered valley, along every babbling stream, lay the lodges of the pampered tribes,—old men and children, old women and young, living indolently and in plenty at their guarded homes, while the sons and brothers and braves, the war-chiefs and the turbulent young men, swarmed into the forbidden grazing-grounds of the settlers, far beyond the treaty line, and in rude and bloody foray found their sole content. The trail the cavalry squad had followed in the early morning along the windings of a feeble tributary of the Mini Ska had left the broad valley thirty miles away to the south, and, bursting through a dividing ridge by way of Wagon Gap, left the old beaten road at the Springs where they made their noonday halt, plunged into the timbered ascent close to the backbone of the ridge, while the road, by a sweep or *détour* to the east, climbed gradually to the level of the upland and could be faintly seen in places five or six miles away like a dun-colored ribbon gartering the green carpet of the prairie. To their left and rear a frowning gorge in the heart of the range opened the narrow way that led to the basin or cove among the pine-covered hills,—the Slaughter Cove the guide had pointed out at noon. To their right, therefore, all was bold, open, undulating, smiling in unclouded sunshine; to their left—the west—all was dark, frowning, and forbidding; and yet the one was the path of death and danger, the other the only line of escape.

"By Jove, what a magnificent view!" is Thornton's exclamation after a moment's gaze. "What did you see, sergeant? You looked as though something lively was up. Any sight of the chase?"

But Jeffers, crouching low and pointing over along the slope not a quarter of a mile away, simply said, "Look there, sir."

Two lithe, painted objects, crawling slowly on all-fours, with feathered war-bonnets trailing along their bare red backs, were rapidly nearing a third, who, bareheaded, seemed peering over the ridge in his front at some other objects in the ravine beyond, at something out of sight from where the troopers lay. Behind the two crawling creatures first seen came, at ten or twelve yards' distance, others of their kind, eagerly gesticulating and signalling to others still. All on a sudden three or four ponies, placidly cropping the turf down the slope behind their creeping masters, pricked up their ears and glanced nervously around, and in a moment there rode into view, full tilt, one after another, half a dozen more wild warriors in the full panoply of their craft. And—it was his first campaign, he was only a boy—Perry Thornton's heart leaped up in his throat, for the sunshiny, breezy, billowy upland was simply alive with war-parties of Sioux.

"I am willing to do my share of fight,—fight double my weight

of Indians, gentlemen," the guide was saying a moment later. "God only knows what's set them on to us, but the whole Sioux nation's coming up from the Mini Ska, and we're cut off. I can't fight all hell, neither can you. The one chance of getting out of this is by way of Slaughter Cove. There's a game-trail over the range back of it. They ain't seen us yet. Now is our time."

"Whom have they seen? What are they watching over there?" asked Thornton, his lip trembling a bit despite himself.

"I know without waiting to see. It's your fellers coming back from their chase after the road-agents. They have either got the money or they haven't got it. In either case it'll be of no earthly use to them in ten minutes. Those Indians are laying to lay 'em out as they climb the trail. See?"

See? It was plain enough now. Creeping like panthers, the lithe, sinewy fellows were scurrying up to line the crest. Others, dismounting at the run, were hastening to join them. Others, signalling, were conveying some tidings to another party that, three miles away, could now be seen sweeping at full gallop across the Pawnee road.

"Come, gents," said the guide, sliding back to his horse and quickly mounting. "My partner had more sense'n I when he swore he wouldn't trust his scalp north of Wagon Gap. If you want to save your souls alive, mount and follow while there's yet time. I'm bound for the Cove and back to God's country beyond."

A nervous young trooper started to follow as the frontiersman went sliding and sprawling back down the trail, but a stern voice checked him. One glance in the sergeant's eyes was all the reassurance Thornton needed. The spirit of his soldier father spoke out on the instant:

"Stay where you are, men! Let that d—d coward go. We're here to save Schultz and Schramm."

XI.

A moment longer the two soldiers, boy lieutenant and veteran sergeant, remained crouched at the ridge, peering over, and in low eager tones making their plans. The actions of the Indians clearly indicated that they were, as the guide remarked, "laying" for some party coming back along the trail. There could not be more than four or five in the party, or the Indians would not attack at the moment, but wait until they had more of their kind to back them. There could not be less than two or three, or the warriors would have been down on the poor devils before this, six to one. The one dread now was that they might shoot from the rocks before their friends could interfere. All this was hurriedly discussed, then up spoke Thornton: "We'll charge at once. We can drive them off, get Schultz and Schramm out, and then all retire together into the Cove. Mount! Tumble up there, you men. Drop carbines and draw pistols. Keep watch, sergeant. Wait till we're ready."

And now the intense excitement of the moment seems to communi-

cate itself even to the tired horses. Eagerly they begin to toss their heads and paw the earth and sniff and snort. "Smell the Sioux, do you?" mutters one trooper, as he braces tighter the cinch of his saddle. There is indeed "mounting in hot haste," yet without noise or confusion of any kind. Perry's young heart is beating like a forge, and for the life of him he can't prevent a trembling at the knees as he swings into saddle and looks to the chamber of his revolver. It's his first fight, yet so constantly has he studied and pondered over all the experiences of his comrades that he feels certain his plan is the right one,—to burst from their covert, stampede the dozen Indians close at hand, then slip away with the victims that were to be, before the more distant warriors can reach the spot. Once back within the natural fortress of the Cove, they can bid defiance to five times their number. Meanwhile, the men, some a little white and tremulous, others, veterans at the business, cool and imperturbable, have mounted, slipped the muzzles of their carbines into the ready sockets, and, like their young leader, are testing their pistols. Jeffers raises his hand in signal. "They're getting ready, sir. Two of them are sighting now."

"Then we haven't a second to lose," says Thornton. "Just follow me now, full dash; but don't yell till I do. Keep quiet till we get right on 'em. Then gather in our fellows and get back here quick as you can. Forward now. I shan't give any commands."

Up the slope they ride in column of twos. There's no space to form "front into line." Perry's heart and Perry's horse alike are bounding. Ten seconds, and they are over the crest and in full view of their foemen four hundred yards away, between them only the open, rolling surface of elastic turf. Quick as each man reaches the summit he plunges ahead, "opens out," and rides up on line with the leaders, Thornton, still curbing his excited horse, riding at plunging lope and glancing back to see his followers out of the ravine. Then Jeffers comes tearing up to join him. Then comes a loud, resonant, Indian warning, shouted from somewhere down the sunny slope, and then there's no time to think. Every man at the instant claps spurs to his horse's flanks and sets up a yell, and then down they go in sweeping charge, straight at the painted, feathered bipeds leaping for their ponies along the opposite rise. Distant Indians let drive long-range shots, in hopes of downing a horse and breaking the impetus of the cavalry dash. There are three or four of these who have reached their ponies, leaped into saddle, and, as they scurry away, bend low and send a wild shot or two at the rushing horsemen, but all to no purpose. Thornton and his followers come cheering, charging on, straight for the second crest, and in an instant one luckless warrior is tumbled over by the leaders, while Jeffers and Malloy, long used to hunting in couples, have run down another, who, farther to the left, had sought to mount and escape. The ping and crack of revolvers and Winchesters echoing back from the rocky range are suddenly dwarfed by the louder bang of the Springfield rifle. Dashing up and over the ridge, occupied but an instant before by the red men, Thornton comes into view of a little party away down the trail ahead of him. Two of their horses are already shot, one stiffening out in death, one rolling in agony. Two

white men, dismounted, are battling for their lives against a circling rush of Sioux, and, borne by the mad impetus of the charge, Perry and the half-dozen at his heels swoop headlong down among the combatants, and the Sioux, amazed yet never bewildered, bend low on their ponies' necks and go sweeping away up the farther side of the long ravine, then, circling about, spring to earth and at long range resume the fight. Their bullets are whistling about Thornton's ears, as he reins up in the midst of the rescued party. One man, with the film of death already glazing his eyes, a stranger, lies gasping on the turf. Over him, piteously crying his name, a mere boy is bending. Sergeant Schultz, grave, yet with quivering lip and trembling hand, gives greeting to his young officer. "We were surprised, sir, and cut off. We had no hope of rescue," he is saying, while the men are rapidly dismounting and running out to kneel and return the fire now coming in from almost every side, Schramm, cheering with delight and enthusiasm, leading them on.

Then comes the up-hill fight to gain the Cove. Not an instant can be lost. Already, with soldierly appreciation of the situation, Sergeant Jeffers has dismounted two or three men to hold the ridge over which lies the line of retreat, and Thornton, directing two men to lead back the horses, disperses his little force as skirmishers. "Get your wounded back up the hill," he says to Schultz. "Jeffers knows where we are to make our stand. Fall back, fast as you can. We'll keep 'em off." The bullets are nipping the bunch-grass all round them, and the old German sergeant's face is very grave and white, but he never wavers. Schramm, after hoisting the wounded stranger into saddle and giving the reins into the hands of the weeping boy and calling for some one to steady his father, runs back to join the firing line. Slowly up the trail now Schultz marshals the led horses. Back slowly between them and the yelling Indians, now each moment reinforced, comes the little band of defenders. Over to the left, a young trooper, under fire for the first time, suddenly drops his carbine, claps hands to his leg, and sets up a howl of misery.

"Help him if you can, Schramm," sings out Thornton. "Keep your places, the rest of you." Thicker come the hissing bullets from front and flank. Only Jeffers's forethought saves them from attack in rear. At last the horses, snorting and plunging, have reached the ridge and are led safely over into the swale beyond. At last the German sergeant has convoyed his wounded across the barrier, then turns for one or two shots over the heads of his comrades now backing up the slope. It is the instinct of battle, the impulse of the soldier,—and the last of his soldierly life. Finger on trigger, muscular hand grasping the brown carbine in the act of aiming, down, face foremost on the sward, poor Schultz has tumbled, a Winchester bullet tearing through his loyal heart.

Five minutes later, in a little amphitheatre among the rocks, two hundred yards to the west of the ridge from which the Indians first were sighted, the well-nigh breathless detachment is regathering, and the fight goes on. Here, stretched on the ground, stone-dead now, lies the civilian,—the stranger found in company with Schultz and

Schramm,—while sobbing over him kneels his boy. Here, badly frightened, the wounded recruit has been dropped and told to quit his noise. Here, badly wounded, lies Corporal Treacy, an Irish trooper whose five years in the cavalry have known many a scene of death and danger, but whose only worry now is that he cannot fire another shot. Here Jeffers is posting the men among the rocks as they arrive, so as to cover the retreat of the lieutenant and two or three still out at the front and for the moment invisible. Schramm, having dropped his wounded comrade under a sheltering boulder, has run up to Jeffers just as two men come drifting in, one supporting the other, who is bleeding and deathly white.

"They have killed Bredow, my horse," he cries, his blue eyes snapping and great beads of sweat starting from his face. "Where is the lieutenant?"

"Back there, trying to lug in Schultz's body," gasps the wounded man. "Only two fellows left. Hurry—save——" and down he goes in a dead faint.

"Schultz's body! Gott in Himmel!" cries Schramm, as with one bound he is over the boulders and rushing out to the front again.

Two hundred yards away, just over the ridge, with whoop and yell and flashing rifles, the Indians have concentrated their energies on one devoted little squad. Stumbling up the slope, Thornton has come upon the prostrate form of the veteran soldier, stone-dead, yet in mute appeal seeming to beg that he be not left to the savage mutilation of the Sioux. "Here, Connor!—Help me, Fritz!" he shouts to the nearest men; and so, desperate and daring, the three join forces to save their friend. One drags, the others fire, and they have just got the senseless clay to within ten yards of the crest, when with triumphant rush and yell the mounted Sioux come charging at them. Poor Perry! All in a flash he sees that hope has fled,—that here on this wild upland, far from home and loved ones, just at the opening of the career so long sought, so proudly entered, his gallant, manful, soldierly effort has cost him his life. But he has lived like a Thornton,—like a Thornton he'll die; and, kneeling by Schultz's lifeless form, he drives the last shot from the sergeant's carbine, tosses it aside, grips tight his beautiful revolver, a proud father's gift, and with a last prayer on his lips, and mother's face swimming before his eyes, braces himself for the shock. There is sudden clamor of shots behind him. Straight in front, not forty yards away, a charging Sioux plunges head-foremost to the ground, his pony veers wildly, so do two others, and the well-aimed shots have taken effect. "Courage!" he shouts. "They haven't got us yet." For, checked by this unlooked-for salute and dreading more, the warriors duck and swerve and circle away. Then down comes Schramm, with Jeffers a close second.

"Quick, lieutenant! Quick! Back to the ridge! We'll bring Schultz."

Too late. Seeing how puny in numbers are the little party of rescuers, the Sioux come on again, firing as they dash, and then for the first time Thornton finds his hands and arms covered with blood. A deadly faintness overcomes him. The earth begins to swim and rock

and whirl, and he only knows that Schramm has swung him on his broad and muscular shoulders before he swoons away. They are holding his flask to his lips when—safe for a time at least—he reopens his eyes among the rocks at Slaughter Cove.

"Where are the Indians?" he faintly asks.

"It's what I can't understand," says Jeffers. "We could see whole troops of them riding away like the wind, southeastward towards the Ska. There ain't more'n a dozen round us now, I reckon,—not enough to attack, yet too many to admit of our getting out, with all our wounded. Thank God, sir, we got you back in time to check the blood. That bullet just missed the jugular, but you bled like a stuck pig. Schramm says you were all covered with it when he reached you."

"I didn't know I was hit—more than a mere graze," said Thornton, faintly.

"Hit twice, sir. You got the other when they dashed on us at the crest and Schramm had to drop you for a minute."

"Did Schramm carry me out?"

"Every foot of the way, sir. The little Dutchman is made of steel: only he's heart-broken about Schultz. We couldn't fetch him in, sir. They got the body, after all, and I had to order Schramm under arrest to prevent his going out a second time."

Thornton closes his eyes a moment. Faint from loss of blood, the realization of the peril of the past hour and the danger of the present, he knows no pain from his wounds, he realizes that he is in command, responsible for all, and that there may yet be a demand for his every energy. He needs to think; yet everything seems awlirl.

"Take another pull at this, lieutenant," says Jeffers. "You're very weak yet, but we're all right now." And he holds the flask to the boy's lips and raises him on his arm. "It's my belief the battalion has struck the main body of these beggars over near the river, and flash-signals have been going for the last hour. We can see 'em with your glasses. If they have, we're well avenged, for there isn't an old hand in all the regiment that isn't just mad for a fair fight with 'em. They won't bother us more this day, so long as we keep inside and under cover, and if the colonel's after them the rest won't stop to inquire for us to-morrow either."

"How many are wounded?" asks Thornton, feebly.

"Well, sir, there's yourself and Corporal Treacy,—you're the only ones seriously hurt. Little Reddy there is shot in the leg, and three or four are scratched. Schramm's shirt is full of holes, and I thought he must be hit, he was so covered with blood. Between losing Schultz and Bredow, he feels pretty well broke up; but there won't be anything too good for him in the regiment when we get back, sir. Here he comes now: he's been over at the spring, washing off the blood."

Thornton feebly turns: "Schramm, my brave fellow! it seems I owe my life to you. Where would I have been but for your courage?"

And Schramm, apparently not seeing the hand feebly outstretched, stands at salute and replies,—

"Where would I have been, sir, but for the lieutenant?"

XII.

"HEAD-QUARTERS DETACHMENT—TH INFANTRY,
CAMP AT SLAUGHTER COVE, June —, 187—.

"POST ADJUTANT, FORT RANSOM:

"SIR,—I have the honor to report that in compliance with the verbal orders of the major commanding the battalion I marched with four officers and seventy men of Companies E and H,—th Infantry, to the relief of Lieutenant Thornton's detachment of the 11th Cavalry, reported besieged by Indians at this point. Leaving camp of the battalion on the Mini Ska at 1 A.M. on Wednesday, with three days' cooked rations, we reached Buffalo Springs soon after dawn ($6\frac{1}{2}$ miles), pushed on through Wagon Gap, reaching the head-waters of Fossil Creek ($27\frac{1}{2}$ miles from camp) at 10.45. From this point our advance was slow, as Indians could be seen along the heights, and we had reason to expect attack. They drew off at our approach, however, and we reached the besieged party near Slaughter Cove about 1 P.M., much to the relief of its members, who, though at no time suffering for food or water, were without surgical attention for their wounded, and had had a sharp fight with a large force of hostiles on Sunday, and had been under fire much of the time ever since. Fortunately for them, the general engagement between their comrades of the Eleventh and the main body of the enemy, forty miles to the southeast, had the effect of drawing all but a small number away from their front and of driving them thence to the agency. There is every reason to believe, however, they would have returned by this time to finish their bloody work had we not been hurried to the scene.

"The killed are Sergeant Schultz and a civilian by the name of Stearns, whose son, a lad of eighteen, is with us, but seems so distracted by his recent experience that his mind is unbalanced. The civilian was one of a party of four who had ridden northward and were pursued by Sergeant Schultz and Private Schramm on the supposition that they were connected with the paymaster's robbery at Minden and had the money with them. Schramm reports that these two met them close to the scene of the fight, galloping back, saying they were attacked by Sioux, and their comrades, who were some distance ahead, were probably killed. The speedy appearance of the Indians proved the truth of part at least of their story. Lieutenant Thornton's prompt charge saved the lives of the two troopers, but in the engagement which followed Schultz was killed, and the other casualties were the result of an attempt to save his body. Lieutenant Thornton, who appears to have behaved with great gallantry throughout, being twice wounded in the effort, was himself saved from death by the devotion of Private Schramm, who bore him away on his shoulders in the face of a dozen enemies. Among the other wounded are Sergeant Jeffers, Corporal Treacy, Troopers Reddy and Gross. Dr. French reports that they can speedily be moved to Pawnee, and urges that as soon as possible ambulances be sent to meet us.

"After the wounding of Sergeant Jeffers, the active command of the defence was vested in Private Schramm, whose bravery and skill

were so marked as to win from his superiors the most unstinted praise. He is now threatened with fever as the result of exposure and exhaustion and grief over the death of his friend, but Dr. French hopes that it will prove nothing of great gravity.

"We begin the homeward march, carrying the wounded on litters, to-morrow morning. The body of Sergeant Schultz, fearfully mutilated, was found and afterwards buried by our men this afternoon.

"The conduct of the detachment under my command was excellent: every man was in his place at the end of the thirty-five-mile march.

"Very respectfully,

"Your obedient servant,

"D. G. FENTON,

"Capt. —th Infantry, Commanding."

Such was the official report which had followed Rhett's command back to Ransom and brought a gleam of sunshine through all the gloom. The death of Captain Manning, an officer of sterling worth, and that of so many good men and true, three of whom had families at the post, could not but weigh heavily on the spirits of one and all. The home-coming of the wounded, however, called for the active services of many hands as well as the liveliest sympathy of every heart, for the journey by field and rail had been a trying ordeal in the fierce heat which for seven days after Winthrop's fight had seemed to hard-bake the broad valley of the Ska even to the westward mountains. Then the grief aroused by the casualties in the main engagement had been supplemented by keen anxiety as to the fate of Perry Thornton and his party. Rhett was a cool-headed fellow and had done about the right thing: even Edwards and other cavalry cranks were ready to admit that. Aroused soon after midnight by his officer of the day and the demoralized deputy, he had little time to think. Orders required him with his battalion to march back to Pawnee as escort for the wounded. Communication with department head-quarters in the dead of night would have involved hours of delay. The deputy might be lying, yet the chances were in favor of the truth of his stories. Rhett knew the bulk of the Indians must have scampered for home in order to show up at the muster sure to be made, so as to convince the agency officials, at least, of their presence, and that they therefore could have had no part in the recent outrages. The general had taken the field, going 'cross country after Winthrop, and was now far beyond telegraphic reach. If the Sioux had surrounded Thornton near Slaughter Cove, the sooner help was sent the better. Fenton, always ready for anything and keenly relishing the idea of footmen marching to the relief of cavalry, was promptly told to take his own company and Company E and "get there." The cooks were up, coffee boiling, and bacon sizzling, before the order was fairly out of the major's mouth, and the command marched away towards the gap in the far blue hills under the twinkling pole-star within the hour.

"God speed you, old man! Send us word quick as you can," said

Rhett, as the dusky little column went swinging away out of camp. "Give 'em a lick for me, Mickey," called Private Toohey to a chum in a luckier company than his own. And that was the last heard of them for twenty-nine hours. Then two of the lately-besieged troopers, Fritz and Reuter, came trotting in among the travois just as the convoy broke camp at the mouth of Pawnee Gorge, twenty miles nearer home. Leaving the Cove at dark the previous evening, they had ridden all night with the news of the rescue, had routed out the telegraph operator at Ska Bridge and sent away certain despatches with which they were charged, had learned that the major and his command had passed on about nine A.M. and would be found somewhere to the south along Pawnee Fork, and then pushed ahead with the glad tidings. Everybody, therefore, at Ransom knew the main facts long before Rhett and the wounded got home. Everybody mourned for Schultz, a veteran of nearly twenty years' service in the regiment, and rejoiced for Schramm, who had covered himself with glory. Everybody was proud of Thornton's spirited behavior in his maiden fight, and full of genuine distress over his wounds. Edwards, badly shot and a veteran of many a tough cavalry campaign, wasn't the object of one-tenth the sympathy that was lavished on "Pretty Perry," one of whose hurts—that slit along his neck—was a mere scratch, that would be an ornament to him all the rest of his life, while the hole bored by the little Winchester in his side was something that would soon heal and seldom hurt him. But who can paint the sensation at the Thorntons' happy home? Delight and dismay intermingled! Telegram followed telegram, that which came from the general late in the day blinding Colonel Thornton's eyes: "The regiment glories in your gallant boy. We'll send him East on leave at once. Full report by mail."

Then with what eagerness they waited the coming of letters and particulars! with what emotion did they read Perry's modest pencil scrawl, bidding them ascribe all credit to Jeffers and give all gratitude to Schramm! with what fluttering hearts, what tearful eyes, did they strive to read Fenton's letter telling the story of Perry's dash to the rescue of the imperilled troopers, of his heroic effort to save poor Schultz's body, of the daring and devotion of Trooper Schramm, of the enthusiastic praise the little detachment lavished on their young lieutenant! Here at least there was no division of sympathy or sentiment. Here at least was Perry the hero of the Indian campaign, the future leader in many another. Stopping only long enough to drop in upon a little coterie of old campaigners, receive their hearty congratulations, and read them the despatches from the seat of war, the veteran colonel left by first train for the far West to meet his boy and to bear to that brave and devoted Prussian trooper the blessings, the gratitude, and the assurance of the fervent prayers of mother and sisters for his own happiness and prosperity for all the years of his life—and beyond.

Four days and nights of ceaseless travel it took the colonel to reach Pawnee. By that time the general with Tintop and the regiment was far to the northeast, straightening out another squabble, the

army as usual acting as buffer between the Indians and the people and getting hard knocks on both sides. By that time Rhett with his command was back at Ransom, and Fenton with the wounded from Slaughter Cove was on the homeward march. They were breaking camp in Pawnee Gorge, thirty miles north of the station, just about the time that No. 3 went whistling down the grade, shooting the sharp curves of Antelope Fork after leaving the colonel to be received by the quartermaster at Pawnee Station. His first question was for news of his boy, who was doing splendidly, said the officer, when they passed Ska Bridge yesterday. "Fenton's going to send him with one or two others ahead in the ambulances this morning. They'll be here before noon. Schramm comes in at the same time, poor fellow. He's got an ugly touch of fever, Dr. French wires, and they want to get him to hospital as soon as possible. The death of his friend Schultz seems to have been a hard blow."

"I wish they'd let me take him home with us," said Colonel Thornton, with glistening eyes. "I know a little woman who followed the drum many a long year with me, and two pretty girls as ever were born under the flag,—if it is their father who says it,—who would be only too happy to spend nights and days for weeks to come nursing that young gentleman back to life. Do you know him at all?"

"Only by sight, sir. He was quite a character at the post, owing to his devotion to Captain Morgan, who helped him out of a close call last year just after he enlisted. They all agree that he is a gentleman by birth and breeding, whom some freak of fortune has landed on our shores. He'd get the Iron Cross at home for this exploit."

"Well, we'll show him here that if we have no decorations to offer, we Americans know how to appreciate heroism and reward it. There's nothing much too good for such a fellow, in our eyes."

An hour later, the sun just peeping up over the eastern verge of the plateau and the colonel and his host being comforted with early coffee, the quartermaster could not help but note how wistfully the old soldier's eyes kept turning to the northern road. An inspiration seized him.

"Look here, colonel, it's going to be a hot day, and those fellows would be glad of a little ice. Suppose we take my buckboard and drive out and meet them?" And Thornton, after the proper amount of hesitancy as to taking an officer away from his duties, gladly assented. So the quartermaster ordered out his team, and by six o'clock they were bowling over the magnificent prairie road, with the sun clambering higher every minute, and with a couple of buckets of ice, blanket-swathed, swinging under the rear axle. Two hours later, rounding a bold shoulder of bluff among the bends of the Pawnee Gorge, they caught sight of white wagon-covers halted at a little clump of willows half a mile ahead. "Hurrah! Yonder they are at the Springs," said the quartermaster.

And there they found them. Two or three soldiers were passing cups of the cool, sparkling water to the fevered hands under the canvas screens. The young doctor, dismounted, catching sight of the coming buckboard, sauntered forward to meet it, in hopes of letters.

One glance at the gray-moustached soldier by the driver's side was enough.

With extended hand he hastened to help him alight, as the quartermaster reined in his braying mules.

"Colonel Thornton, I feel certain," said he. "Yonder's your boy in the ambulance,—jolly as any Mark Tapley you ever heard of." And Thornton, unable at the moment to speak a word, grasped and shook the doctor's hand, bowed his gray head, and passed him by.

"There's a meeting that would disarm the cynicism of a Carlyle," said the doctor, an instant later, though both men turned their backs and looked away, for under the lifted curtain of his trundling litter Perry had peeped and seen his father's face,—the father whom he supposed two thousand miles away.

Just before noon that day, under the doctor's careful supervision, the wounded were being lifted from the wagons and borne beneath the canvas flies stretched for them in the coolest and breeziest part of the quartermaster's guarded corral. Perry, boy-like, had insisted on scrambling out on his feet, partly to show how lively he was, partly that he might be close at hand when there was borne with measured tread and gentle hands the prostrate form of a trooper whose flushed face and twitching hands and glittering eyes proved him to be in the clutch of burning fever. About his litter, anxiety in every look, hovered the colonel and his wounded boy, for there lay gallant Schramm, blind to their solicitude, deaf to any word of cheer.

"I think we can bring him round in a few days of quiet here," said Dr. French, "but quiet we must have."

"Well, sir," said the colonel, decidedly, "we don't leave here until you do. There are mother and sisters hungering at home to get at Perry, but neither my boy nor I can turn a back on a soldier like Schramm. Let me know just what he needs, and every cent we've got is at your service."

"It is a serious fever, I fear," said the doctor, "but what he needs most now is absolute repose. We've got to guard him against disturbance of any kind."

"Do you mean he can't be moved at all, doctor?" asked a man who, with one or two other civilians, had entered the enclosure despite the efforts of the corral-master, who, positive at first in his refusal, had stepped back bewildered at sight of a formidable paper.

"Certainly," said Dr. French, shortly, with the "Who are you?" expression that comes into the faces of the most even-tempered of men when disturbed in the midst of their duties.

"Then we've simply got to camp here till he can be,—me and my party."

"You have? I'd like to know why."

"'Cause I don't mean to lose my position through losing him. Here's my warrant. That man's wanted for the Minden robbery."

XIII.

It was July before the sheriff of Latimer County would have been allowed the undisputed custody of the person of Trooper Schramm, and by that time the sheriff began to wonder whether he really wanted him or not. To begin with, the young German lay at Pawnee for nearly a week in about the hottest fever Dr. French had ever encountered. The infantry went on home to Ransom with most of Thornton's little squad and the wounded, but Colonel Thornton's influence with his old comrade the adjutant-general of the department was amply sufficient to have the doctor and some attendants remain there with his son and Schramm. There were days of delirium in which the young Prussian babbled of the Rhineland, of home and mother, of old days in saddle with the Hussars on the sunny slopes beyond Metz, of mad envy at sight of Bredow's squadrons riding away eastward from the heights of Tronville, down the sheltering ravine, then up the slopes again and, in headlong charge, full on the front of the battling French. Then, exultant, he seemed to hear the longed-for order for his own fellows, to recall the keen soldier rivalry between Uhlan, cuirassier, and hussar as the three regiments "lined up" for their charge, with dragoons and hussars in support, and with the August sun just sinking in the west they swooped down upon the arrayed divisions of Montern and Clerambault to the north of Mars-la-Tour. And then he lived again the perilous hour of his first experience with the Sioux, and poured out his heart in gratitude to the officer who so pluckily saved him. Old Thornton, sitting by his camp cot, his father-heart yearning over his own boy lying in placid slumber close at hand, learned enough to guide him in a letter to the American legation at Berlin,—a soldier father's letter to another soldier father in a foreign land, angered at and estranged from the son of whose very existence, perhaps, he was in doubt. The letter was posted before Thornton heard him babble of other names, and tell of the gnädige Fräulein, Morgan's oldest child, and with grave face the colonel rose and looked at his sleeping boy, and went out upon the breezy prairie, walking for hours before his return. Many things did Schramm mutter and murmur and reveal that Thornton could not understand at all, but he knew enough German to divine much of the soldier's past, and to demand of his son what letter was that he sent to Constance Morgan; whereat Perry, looking much amazed, answered, with all promptitude, "Letter to Connie Morgan? Why, certainly! I wrote to her the second day out from Ransom to tell her what you told me about promotion and to ask her to send us the measures for her father's belt and helmet. The men of the old troop were bound to send him his captain's shoulder-knots, and some one suggested that it might be a pious idea to chip in and order a complete new outfit, helmet and knots and belt and all,—just to surprise him. Some thought he might take offence, but old Tintop swore he shouldn't." And Thornton *père* walked out again. Perry had never lied to him in his life. Would it be fair to ask the boy if he had been making love to Morgan's motherless daughter?

But within the week the crisis was over: Schramm was out of

danger. Mother and sisters were clamoring for Perry at home, so eastward went the colonel and his boy, and presently, by easy stages, westward went Schramm, his escort camping at Alkali, crossing to the north bank and going on to Minden, where camp was made again, and where Mr. Fisk, the agent, came over, ostensibly to see if he could be of any service, and then went back to his office and said to a deputy sheriff that if that was one of the men who came in with the despatch that Friday morning of the 1st of June he'd changed so he couldn't tell him.

Meantime, Rand had been clear around to the agency by the other route, and turned up again at Butte the day Schramm was returned to Ransom. "Don't you disturb him, Mr. Sheriff," said he; "and just take my advice now, don't go too fast on this trail; you may get in so far you can't get back—with credit to yourself." And out at the post the doctor had given strict orders that nobody should breathe in Schramm's hearing what everybody knew,—that he was "wanted" for the Minden robbery. "My first duty is to see him restored to health and strength," said he: "then the law must take its course." And so, with the regiment long miles away, Schramm lay patiently in hospital, tenderly thought for by every one, frequently remembered through the mails by the distant family of Thorntons, promoted corporal of his troop in regimental orders promulgated from head-quarters in the field and read to the whole assembled command both there and here at Ransom, reciting the heroic nature of his conduct in the affair at Slaughter Cove and the skill and bravery with which, his superiors being disabled by wounds, he had conducted the defence. All this was very pleasant to Schramm, whose eyes lighted with joy when Morgan, his captain now, and Jeffers, invalided by wounds, and Treacy ditto, all came in to congratulate him; but the sweetest thing in life to the convalescing soldier was the sight of Connie Morgan's pretty face when, regularly as the day came round, the gnädige Fräulein appeared with some little bunch of wild flowers, some little dainty or cool drink, but always with her gentle voice and soft brown eyes and sweet, serious smile, to ask how the corporal was feeling this bright day. The only trouble now was that he began to get well too fast. His fellow non-commissioned officers, Jeffers and Treacy, limping in one day, said there was a big row among the railway people all over the East. "Riots and ructions" had followed. The militia and police were whipped. The regiment had been whisked in from the field, piled into passenger-cars, and sent away towards Omaha, and they, the wounded of the Indian war, were losing this trip to civilization and beyond. Next day Rhett and his men were suddenly telegraphed for, and again was Captain Morgan both ordnance- and commanding officer.

And then one beautiful day Schramm sent for Mrs. Hinkel and his box, and she, weeping, came to Constance, and together they appealed to Morgan, and then the old man in the new shoulder-straps realized that the matter could no longer be hidden, and before nightfall Schramm learned that he was under the surveillance of the sheriff, charged with being accessory to the robbery of Paymaster Graves, at least to the extent of receiving and concealing a certain part of the money. And

Schramm, speechless with wrath and amaze, stood attention to his captain on the hospital porch, and simply quivered and shook and clinched his hands. Morgan made him sit down, and, prefacing his statement with the assurance that no one who knew him believed him in the faintest way connected with the robbery, went on to say there were certain matters that, unexplained, seemed to point to him with the finger of suspicion. He and Schultz left camp on Bear Fork toward half-past twelve A.M., and though they started back by the trail of the regiment they had probably left it and borne away over to the south so as to ride along the bank of the Ska, in plain view of Minden, ten minutes after the departure of No. 3 and just after the robbery. A Mr. Long had seen two troopers on roans riding briskly west at that time. The operator said the troopers had come in beforehand with the false despatch, and he thought they might have looked like Schultz and Schramm. The paymaster couldn't be sure,—couldn't identify him; but Mr. Lacy, the clerk, had described the two who met them at the train and led them back from the dépôt while he followed in rear, and Lacy's description certainly pointed to them. Then on reaching the garrison Schramm had gone to Mrs. Hinkel, got his box, put a package in it and charged her on no account to let it fall into other hands, and this box the sheriff had opened in presence of the commanding officer, and the first thing found was an envelope containing five hundred dollars in fifties, which Lacy was ready to swear was some of the lot taken from the paymaster's valise. Then they were in town together and hurried away the moment they learned that the robbery was known and soldiers suspected, and instead of returning to the regiment they had turned off and gone away northward through Wagon Gap until met and run back by the Sioux. This, said Morgan, was the case against him as far as he knew.

Schramm's first question was as to the letters and papers: where were they? "Sealed up and safe," said Morgan. "We have the officer's pledge as to that. So is the money sealed up." But Schramm didn't seem to care about the money. That was of little consequence. He could explain at once where it came from. A draft from the old country had reached him early in May at a time when he wished to use money, and Schultz cashed it for him. Schultz would not put his savings in the Butte banks. His money was in Chicago. He had had money sent out to him by express. This could be verified at the express-office, and the draft could doubtless be traced back through Schultz's Chicago banker. As for their taking the Minden road, it was not much longer, they had plenty of time, and the road near the river was prettier. Close to the bridge on the south side they had seen some horses held by one or two men just as the train pulled away. Then away over by the dépôt were some fellows who appeared to be wearing cavalry overcoats, ranchmen probably who were going to drive out some distance, as troopers wouldn't think of wearing overcoats in June. They were interested watching the distant train, however, speeding away westward, and they rode at a brisk lope up the valley, never thinking of the party of men and horses again until that afternoon. Then, hearing of the robbery, it flashed upon them that they

had seen the perpetrators, and back they went, heard of them down the stream drinking and quarrelling among themselves, were close on their trail opposite Wagon Gap, and decided to follow, thinking they might possibly overhaul and recapture some of them, at least, with the result already known. Beyond the Cove they came upon Stearns and his boy racing back for their lives, pursued by Indians. No time to ask questions then. It was fight for life against the common foe. The man was killed before he could tell his story, and now Schultz was gone. Schramm had to face it alone.

"No, not alone," said Morgan. "We believe you guiltless and mean to see you through." And then Colonel Rand came out to see him. What Rand wanted was to know what had been done with the papers, etc., taken from the civilian who died of his wounds at the Cove. All Schultz's effects, of course, were in the hands of the officers whose duty it was to take charge of the papers and property of deceased soldiers. Rand said the boy had been taken to an asylum and was recovering, but had neither money nor papers of any kind. Schramm could hardly be persuaded to sit in the presence of an officer of such distinction as Rand, but succumbed to orders. A wallet with letters and papers and a little money, a silver watch, and a tobacco-box, had been taken from the body before burial. These were all turned over to Captain Fenton when he came. The man's name was Stearns, and his post-office address Minden. And then up jumped Rand with light in his eyes.

"That's what I wanted to know," said he. "I thought I'd seen that poor boy before.—Now, corporal, don't worry about this matter. We could acquit you easily enough, but there's something else to be done. We want to nail the real perpetrators and get that money back if possible: so the trial can't come off just yet."

"But—pardon, colonel," said Schramm, rising again. "May I not my box have? There are letters, portraits,—home-gifts." And Rand said he was going in to see the sheriff then and there.

A month the troops from the plains were kept on duty in and around the railway-centres of the West. Four long weeks the garrison at Ransom consisted of Morgan, the surgeon, the band, the ordnance-sergeant and clerk, quartermaster, employees, and so on, with the hospital steward and attendants, the sick and wounded. Schramm, convalescing rapidly now, was assigned to daily duty at the adjutant's office. Jeffers, still limping a little, with Treacy and others, became the nucleus of a species of running guard, and did patrol and watch duty. The railway company, grateful for the services of the troops in saving their property, sent a sleeper to Butte and an invitation for such of the officers' families as would like to go to Chicago, Omaha, or wheresoever the husband and father might be, as the guests of the road, and many went, and Rand wrote asking for "Connie and the kids" to come on and pay Mrs. Rand a visit, but Connie wouldn't go. Who would take care of daddy? she asked, nestling her face against that veteran's stubbly cheek; and Morgan gave it up.

The sheriff, who had been a frequent visitor, quit coming out to the post, and began to talk around town about the way the fort people

had behaved from the start in this robbery business. He would have had the robbers at the time, only the cavalry had interfered. He and his posse would have nabbed those fellows skipping for Tomahawk Range if it hadn't been that those d—d meddlers of troopers drove them beyond his jurisdiction. The Tomahawk was the name given the black-fringed spur that came down from the mountains west of Wagon Gap almost to the valley of the Ska. It was famous for bear, elk, and black-tail deer, and all its length, except a few miles at the southern end, lay within the Sioux reservation, and no one could go thither to shoot except by previous arrangement with the agency people. Nevertheless old Stearns, the recent victim of Sioux vengeance, had for more than a year kept a shooting-box somewhere in the mountains, where with his half-witted boy he lived a hermit life, coming down to Minden very seldom, yet frequently being seen about the agency at the north. Keen sportsmen of Omaha, Yankton, and Sioux City, it was said, sometimes made up hunting-parties, and, having properly and previously "fixed" the Sioux chiefs through agency interpreters, went up by way of the Indian villages and, with Indian guides, had many a day of famous shooting, and came home, the envied of their kind, with a baggage-car-load of carcasses they could not always even give away. The strikes and riots ended, it suddenly occurred to Colonel Rand that he hadn't shot a bear in years, so he went up around by the all-rail route, taking a couple of friends, and such was his enthusiasm that he could not hear enough about what other parties had been doing in that line. Game-laws did not obtain on Indian lands in those days, except such as the Indian and his keepers agreed upon, and even late in May, it seems, some eager sportsmen had come out from the Missouri and gone into the Tomahawk Range, guided by a clerk in the agency and "Lame Johnny," a half-bred Sioux. For a man so interested at the start, it must be owned that Rand tired rather soon of the sport. He left his friends at the agency after a day or two of desultory shooting, and went back to head-quarters.

Then the troops began to reappear at their old station, as their services were no longer needed; and the August suns were beating hot and dry on the valley of the Ska; and presently Old Tintop and the Eleventh were once more restored to Ransom, and began the work of straightening out their quarters and stables, and the new first lieutenant of Troop D saluted his predecessor, its present captain, and Schramm blushing invited his brother non-commissioned officers, all who could be spared, one evening after their duties at the post to meet him at Conway's restaurant in town, where a bountiful supper was provided, and where each man was regaled with such drink as he most fancied, and where Schramm in a very effective little speech proposed the health of their new captain, which they drank with cheers, and the memory of their gallant comrade Schultz, which they honored in soldier silence. Nothing like this had happened in the annals of the regiment. "Why, it must have cost him sixty or seventy dollars," said Sergeant Bowman, as they rode back to the post that night. One of their number in jocular mood thought it appropriate to ask Schramm

had he been "holding up" another paymaster, or was this what was left of the last one? whereat Schramm looked his interrogator full in the face a few seconds without so much as changing color or saying a word, and then, turning calmly away, resumed his chat with their first sergeant, who as the senior guest at the feast was placed at the right hand of their host. It was evident that Schramm would have no witticism on that head.

But if Schramm took it in dignified silence, the sheriff did not. It grew to be the popular thing for the troopers just then to hail this magnate with the query, "Hullo, sheriff, when's the trial coming off?" The "boys," as they sometimes called themselves, had much resented it that the officials and the public were so ready to accept the theory that only members of the Eleventh Cavalry could have planned and perpetrated the deed. Hence, as time wore on and the evidence against Schultz and Schramm wore off and the sheriff seemed drifting further from a solution of the mystery, the boys took keener delight in chaffing the civil authority on the public streets and inspiring him to mighty blasphemy and portentous threat.

"You fellows had better keep civil tongues in your heads," said he, with many a lurid expletive, the night after the Schramm supper. "You may think it d—d smart to chaff about this. Perhaps you soldiers can turn to now and catch the fellers that ran off with your money. If it wasn't soldiers that did it, by —, I'll lay any bet no soldier can say who else done it."

A week later, however, when the story of the sheriff's wager, "with weeping and with laughter," was being told at Ransom in connection with the liveliest episode in Ransom annals, there fell from the oracular lips of Mrs. Whaling, the relict of a former commanding officer and now a prominent figure in Butte society, the memorable words, "Well, I guess he wishes he hadn't been so precipitous."

XIV.

Pay-day at the post! Old Curran had ordered an extra stand put up in the bar-room, an extra load of keg beer out from Butte, and a choice supply of *cabbageros* for the defenders of their country's flag, who on these occasions deemed it their duty not to be seen out of ranks without a weed in their teeth, no matter how high in price nor how low in grade. The laundresses, arrayed in their best bib and tucker and smiles, had spread the cloth in their shanties down under the hill, with the bucket of punch and dozen of tumblers in readiness for callers,—it being one of the unwritten laws of the rank and file in the good old days to square with the laundress if you didn't square with anybody else. The non-commissioned staff, the band, and the troops had all been ordered to hold themselves in readiness,—the one function of the military year in which such orders were totally unnecessary, even the sick in hospital manifesting a strong desire to get up and go to duty, on that day at least; and Lieutenant Phipps with twenty troopers had met Paymaster Graves as he and Mr. Lacy stepped

forth from No 3, hustled them into the waiting ambulance and around the corner to the express-office, where they accepted for the little iron safe, and then at spanking trot set forth across the prairie and were deposited at the hospitable door of Old Tintop, where breakfast awaited the major, where his safe was stored *pro tempore* under the vigilant eye of the officer of the guard, while Mr. Lacy, pleading previous engagement, begged to be excused and went to take his sustenance under the Currans' roof. Guard was mounted in full-dress uniform at the usual hour, everybody being out for to see, and Gray being in his glory. Even more than usually jubilant and stirring were the strains of the band as, to the rollicking airs from "Arrah na Pogue," the yellow-crested column came swinging around in review, for it was "Cavalry Day,"—one of Tintop's fads being that it spoiled the ceremony and ruined the guard to have foot and troopers march on together. "Uniform, arms, and manual are all unlike," said he, "so what's the use? They no more mix than oil and vinegar: we're the oil and you're the vinegar." And so, being a favorite at department head-quarters, the old fellow had been sustained in his idea of having alternate guard, cavalry one day and infantry the next,—a system which worked in with the "percentage" fairly well and which the colonel pronounced a triumphant success, "and anybody who don't believe it had better not say so."

Then, right after guard-mounting, in their full-dress uniforms, with gloves and side-arms, the garrison was paraded for payment. Graves sat beside a table in the administration room, big stacks of greenbacks,—tens, five, twos, and ones,—and cylindrical columns of silver and nickel, in front of him. Off to his left, muster- and payroll of the first detachment, head-quarters staff, and band open on the table before him, his keen eyes glancing about the room and studying every face, sat Lacy. The adjutant took a seat at another little table, midway between the paymaster and the door, with his duplicate roll, and, all being ready, called the sergeant-major's name. Mr. Lacy called out the amount due. The paymaster rapidly counted out the money and handed it to the soldier who stood attention in front of the desk. The staff and band were speedily settled with and sent about their business. Then came the senior captain with his company, a change of rolls, and so for three hours, without incident of any kind, the interesting yet monotonous ceremony went on. Not until near noon did it come the turn of the captain youngest in commission at the post, and then at last D Troop came swinging across the parade from their barracks, and gray-haired Morgan took the little table just left vacant by Captain Prime. The windows were open, and a soft air was blowing through, and yet it seemed hot and oppressive.

"This is the last company, is it?" said Graves. "Thank God! I'm about tired out now. All ready, captain?"

"All ready, sir," answered Morgan, and then called "First Sergeant Warren."

A buggy drove up in front of the office, and some of the men nudged one another. It was the sheriff who alighted, followed by Colonel Rand. Behind them came another, and a deputy or two in

the saddle. D Troop, standing at ease along the gallery in front of the administration building and from there to the walk leading to the gate, exchanged remarks in an undertone as to the cause of this sudden and suspicious arrival, but no one within the building apparently took notice thereof. A long hall ran through the building from east to west. The men entered the room by the door at the east end, and, receiving their pay, passed out through the other, and so to the rear porch. The paymaster and his clerk sat facing the door at the eastward end of the big room, with their backs to the northern windows, and so took no note of a party passing around on that side of the building. Several officers, clerks, etc., were grouped about the room west of the pay-table, and these were presently reinforced by the new arrivals,—Rand entering, followed by the sheriff and others, but signaling to the officers who greeted him to make no unnecessary to-do. By this time Morgan had read down among the names of his corporals. Rand, quietly suppressing the greetings accorded him, made it known that he wished to listen a moment. Corporal Treacy had just picked up his money, faced to his left, and made room for the next man. "Corporal Hugo V. Schramm," called the captain, and, straight as an arrow, quick, lithe, soldier all over, in stepped the man of Slaughter Cove, hand at visor in salute as he halted. Lacy glanced quickly, curiously up and studied the clear-cut face an instant with his steely blue eyes, then as quickly dropped them. Graves, too, looked up in mingled interest and embarrassment. Here stood the soldier virtually branded by him and his as a robber, yet pronounced by officers and comrades a hero. Graves felt that his first impulse was to hold forth his hand, but it occurred to him that that would hardly be in accordance with military propriety and etiquette. "I should like to see you, corporal, after we finish," said he, in a most conciliatory tone. Schramm thrust his money into the palm of his left-hand glove, saluted precisely, and, merely saying, "Yes, sir," strode away to the west door, but there his name was called in low tone and he halted. An officer beckoned to him to wait, and, wondering not a little, he stopped, then turned to a vacant corner behind Rand.

Rapidly the list was finished, the last man paid. The paymaster stretched his legs and arms and looked around for some one to suggest an adjournment to the club-room, and the first thing he saw was Rand, with the sheriff in his trail, and Graves's eyes began to dilate. Lacy was repacking coin and paper money at the instant and bending over a leather satchel which he had placed on his chair. A strange and sudden silence had fallen upon the crowded room. Old Tintop from his office across the hall, with faithful Gray at his elbow, came lounging to the door, and, catching sight of the civilian garb, stopped short and glared. Lacy, just snapping the clasp of his bag, felt the sudden fall of a muscular hand on his shoulder, and, with a perceptibly violent start, looked up. The bearded face of Colonel Rand was close at his side, the dark eyes sternly fixed upon him, and Lacy turned ashen and his limbs began to tremble and quiver, despite his fiercest effort, for there confronting him stood the sheriff of Latimer County, a pair of steel wristlets in his extended hands.

XV.

The sensation caused by the arrest of Mr. Lacy, the paragon of paymasters' clerks, as he had been described in one of his letters of recommendation, ended not with the going down of the sun that day, nor many thereafter. Graves himself sat in a state bordering on collapse for a few hours after the occurrence.

"Why, that gentleman was recommended by half the Senate, and almost insisted on by my bondsmen," said he, with tears in his eyes. "What will they say to me? Why, Rand, he actually had to be named as my clerk before I could be confirmed at all." To which the imperturbable inspector-general responded, "Yes, no doubt. You see, Graves, they had to get him out of Washington: he knew too much;" and when Graves besought him to say why he suspected the paragon, Rand serenely answered he didn't; he *had* suspected him a month ago, perhaps, but now he *knew*: so should everybody else just as soon as the case could be brought to trial. But meantime other entertainment was provided for the cavalry. Even while Lacy was frantically sending telegrams and letters to officials of high degree all over the East, demanding investigation, vindication, etc., there came an order for the immediate detachment of three of Tintop's companies to take the field far to the northwest. D Troop went as a matter of course. This time Schramm did not have to ask "to go along mit dem fellers." It was their veteran captain who was left behind.

Just as Perry Thornton had told his father, the men of the troop, thankful for, yet declining, the proffered subscription of the officers, had ordered from the East as handsome an outfit of belt, helmet, spurs, shoulder- and sabre-knots, as money could buy, Connie alone of the household being in the secret. Her father never again had asked to see Thornton's letter, and she, who once had been so insistent, ceased all mention of it or of its writer. The glow of delight with which the child had received and read that jolly, warm-hearted, yet utterly unsentimental note had opened the father's eyes no more than it had her own. Constance Morgan stepped from girl- to womanhood in the day and hour which taught her how, little by little, there had been kindled in her heart a tiny flame of tenderness that burned as incense at the altar,—an offering at the shrine wherein the boy sat installed, the hero of a girl's imaginative and impulsive nature. With what burning cheeks did she own it to herself! With what womanly shame did she realize that she had betrayed it ere she herself fairly knew of its existence! She!—an army girl, a soldier's daughter, with Lot and Billy to look after, with dear old daddy to nurse and comfort,—she, Constance Morgan, daring to indulge in idle day-dreaming over a boy in his first uniform! It was simply shameful. She could have scratched the eyes out of any woman who saw her poring over that letter, had there been any there to see. She raged within herself to think that for that moment she had been blind and deaf to her father's presence and lost in reading Thornton's laughing words. No one on earth ever knew what pangs of maidenly wrath and shame "Little Mother" endured for several days, but whenever after that initial exhibition

Morgan looked for further symptom of sentimental regard for the absent lieutenant, he failed entirely, and wished that he might write himself an ass for ever having believed it.

The presentation came off at the assembly-room one lovely evening in July, Sergeant Jeffers being spokesman for the troop and utterly routing Morgan, who knew not how to formulate reply to words so rich with soldierly trust and affection. Close behind the speaker stood Corporal Schramm, his glistening eyes fixed on Connie's beautiful, blushing face, with its swimming eyes, for Jeffers's voice was tremulous when he went on to say how for ten long years the old hands had soldiered under Morgan and never once could recall a harsh or an unjust word, never once a day when his voice or heart or hand had failed them when they looked to him for leadership or aid. The old fellow was worn and ill and heavily laden, and this unlooked-for tribute from his men completely floored him. "Why, men," he stammered, "I—always stood by you as a matter of course. I never dreamed of doing anything else. What's an officer for, if it isn't to be a friend and leader to his own troop first of all? I'm more obliged to you than you can imagine. This isn't strictly according to law and regulations, I am afraid, and if I'd got wind of it in any way before, I should have stopped it; but precedents seem to be plenty of late, and I only wish I might think it would be my luck to wear them as your captain for years to come, but your old lieutenant makes an older captain, and I'm soon to step aside for a younger soldier and better man; but so long as I live, men, this gift of yours and these words of Jeffers's will—will— God bless you all, lads, I can't finish it."

And then the men in their full-dress uniforms had escorted their captain and Connie and the invited guests homeward that night, and the first thing when father and daughter were left alone old Morgan turned to Connie.

"So that was what Thornton's letter was about, was it, Connie?"

"Certainly, father," she replied, looking straight into his eyes with those clear brown orbs of hers. "What else could it have been?" And that was the last mentioned of the subject between them.

Each and every one, the men had shaken hands with their captain and pledged his health in the foaming beer old Curran had insisted on "setting up" for the occasion. They swore, soldier-like, they'd never let the captain retire; but that was a matter beyond their jurisdiction. Wind and weather and many a worry laid the veteran by the heels, and his old enemy, rheumatism, took fresh and forcible hold. When D Troop rode away to take the field, poor Morgan was groaning both in flesh and spirit, and when late that autumn Schramm came posting homeward under subpoena to testify *in re* The People *vs.* Lacy, the chevrons of a sergeant decked his sleeves in recognition of a ride of over a hundred miles through Indian-haunted wilds to bear despatches to a distant command, but neither captain nor Connie was there to bid him welcome. The lonely grave out on the prairie lacked the bunch of wild flowers which formerly decked it every Sunday morning. The old quarters down the row were peopled by strangers to the German soldier now. The sweet face of the gnädige Fräulein smiled no more

from the dormer window over the veranda: the Morgans, one and all, were gone. A retiring board had pronounced the old dragoon unfit for further service, and with his own fuel and quarters to furnish now as best he could, with no more medical attendance or supplies from Uncle Sam, with all the brood to feed and clothe and educate, without a word of aid or welcome from the kinsfolk in the East, poor Morgan meekly took his discharge and his retired pay, and a tiny two-storied cottage in an out-of-the-way street in Butte, and strove to set up housekeeping with Connie at the head and a Chinese man-of-all-work at the foot of the new establishment. Rand had been to see them and urged their all coming eastward awhile as his guests at home, but the railroad company had offered Morgan a little berth which he considered it his duty to accept at once, and Connie scouted the idea of her being in need of rest or change; she could not think of leaving father; and within the month it seemed as though her vision were preternaturally clear, for presently poor Morgan could not leave the house at all. It was at this stage of the proceedings that as Connie, broom in hand, and an old silk handkerchief over her head, was sweeping out the hall one sharp October morning, the Chinaman having been discharged as the result of a strike for more wages and less work, she sent a whirl of dust upon the glistening boots of a statuesque trooper with hand at salute and blue eyes beaming in delight at sight of his friend the captain's daughter.

"Oh, Schr-r-r-amm!" she cried, throwing down her besom and joyously grasping his gauntleted hand. "Where did you come from? Come right in; papa will be so glad!—Here's Schramm—Sergeant Schramm, daddy dear;" and, first closing the outer door, she opened that which led to the Den, and ushered the sergeant in and watched with glistening eyes the greeting of the two soldiers. Schramm must stay and take luncheon with them. "We are no longer on duty, lad," said Morgan, with a sad smile, "and if you'll have a bite with us and tell us all about the old troop it'll be a comfort." And Connie's eyes and lips were even more insistent. Off came the blue overcoat, and there in all the glossy sheen of the new, snug-fitting blouse, with the triple bars of his sergeant's chevrons, the athletic frame of their soldier guest stood revealed, and they made him sit, and Connie poured his tea and bustled in and out of the kitchen, and Schramm sat with his old captain and talked by the hour of the troop, and how well Jeffers held his own now as first sergeant, and what a fine soldier Treacy was, and yet—he did not say how or why, but fast as their term of service expired the old hands took their discharge, and then "took on" in some other troop. And all the time he talked, whensoever she flitted in or out or by, the blue eyes would follow and were full of light and reverence and watchful care. It was as he walked slowly away, two hours later, eagerly promising to come again, that those same blue eyes were clouded with deep anxiety,—Morgan was failing so fast.

The trial, he told them, was to begin forthwith; but it never did. In some of Lacy's appealing letters to former employers in official station in Washington reference was made to the malignant hatred

of Colonel Rand as the inspiration of all their proofless and damnable accusations, and these getting to the War Department and so coming to Rand for remark, the placid colonel finally waxed indignant. It was bad enough, said he, that Lacy should be an expert thief and blackleg, but that to cover his own tracks and those of his pals he should seek the ruin of innocent men was rather too much of a good thing. Then the general came back from the field about this time; Rand made his report, and on went a four-page letter to Washington reciting briefly the evidence now in their possession as affecting Lacy. This was shown to the ex-clerk's friends at court, and two letters from the East, after being opened and examined by the sheriff, were handed in to Lacy's cell the day after Schramm's arrival. That night the prisoner asked for more paper and permission to write till late, and when morning came the neatly-folded document proved to be the final statements of the clerk who had cashed so many papers of that name within the past year—but would cash no more. What was left of Lacy lay stiffening on the narrow cot. The night-watch had not even heard him groan.

A fellow of much inventive genius was Lacy, and of uncommon usefulness until luck turned. Cards, mining stocks, wheat, wine, and women all combined against him. He had to cover the money abstracted to pay his losses and put up more margins. He owed still more, and his creditors, gamblers like himself, said, "Pay or we peach." There was just one way to "raise the wind" without reaping the whirlwind: the paymaster must be robbed on the very next trip; and the plan was to have the train "held up," until the sudden move of the cavalry suggested an easier way. Out went two of his sportsmen friends with letters of introduction to the hunter hermit in the Tomahawk Range. Down they went with him as their guide and companion and scout. Cavalry overcoats and slouch-hats and equipments such as were worn in the field in those days were to be had almost anywhere. Armed with their bogus despatch, they rode to Minden, dodging Sergeant Dolan's escort from Bear Fork to Alkali. Leaving their horses with the boy at the bridge, the three men received the paymaster and Lacy at the station to which he had been lured, and the rest was easy until it came to getting away with the money. The hermit forbade their returning by way of his hut, as they would be trailed thither and he and his boy instantly suspected. They must go farther east, by way of Wagon Gap, and back to the agency with their game, as though from innocent and successful hunt. But, in dodging the troops and certain couriers they saw, time was lost, in which they got to drinking and quarrelling. Lacy's friends were two well-known contractors for Indian supplies, long accustomed to agency ways, well versed in Indian affairs, and often suspected of being knaves of deeper dye than mere swindlers of the aborigines, which species of crime was not bereft of virtue in frontier eyes. They were known to the trade by the names of Stein and Wirtz, and their intimacy with Lacy and certain employees of the quartermaster department had attracted Rand's attention to them months before the robbery. Hearing of their absence from town, he traced them to the agency, thence to the range

beyond, and found that the date of their return that way corresponded exactly with that of Thornton's fight. Young Stearns had at last made a coherent statement. Promising to give his luckless father his share as soon as they got back within sight of that harbor of refuge, but plying him with liquor all the time, these men rode to Fossil Creek in company, then gave their dozing guide the slip and dashed rapidly ahead. Being aware of the Indian outbreak, they probably studied the country with their glasses and saw the commotion among the distant war-parties, and so dodged into the range away from the road, and by a wide détour got safely in, while their hapless guide, following in drunken pursuit, ran foul of the Sioux, was chased and killed. Wisely they hid such of the money as they did not need at the moment, and kept away from head-quarters and Lacy awhile, until the announcement in the papers that the crime had been definitely fixed on the soldiers Schultz and Schramm gave them courage to unearth their plunder and fetch it nearer home. Not that they intended to divide with Lacy by any means,—he was in their toils now, and could be further bled,—but to hold him with mingled threat and promise. And all the time Rand was weaving his web about them. The more coherent statements of the half-witted son, now being gradually restored to such intellect as he possessed, had given ample clue, and the arrest of Lacy at Ransom was the result of a despatch to Rand that his confederates had been pounced upon the previous night at Yankton with over ten thousand dollars of the stolen money in their possession. So long as they did not peach, however, Lacy was still safe, and he played the indignant and wronged and faithful servant, and played it well, for just six weeks; then "*Dux femina facti*"—the woman who was leader—by the nose—of the triumvirate, and the recipient of much of their stolen plunder, was also arrested when on the wing to the East, and—she couldn't keep a secret; her circumstantial confession of the whole business from beginning to end, made when hoping to win exemption for herself, ended the battle. Then Lacy's own hand penned his parting words and freed his shame-stricken soul.

"It was a well-planned job," said Rand, "on Lacy's part at least, but it had its leak so long as there was a woman in it."

And now, as his evidence was no longer needed, Sergeant Schramm had no further business at either Butte or Ransom. "But you don't want to go back that long distance alone," said Old Tintop. "We can assign you to duty here until your troop comes home next month." And, to the adjutant's infinite surprise, Schramm eagerly assented.

October went, and keener winds from the mountain-gorges and fiercer twinges in Morgan's legs reminded them that winter was at hand. Often now the post surgeon found means to ride over to Butte and see the failing soldier, and many a day officers or their wives contrived to visit town and dropped in to see Connie and offer aid and comfort to her father, but Connie declared she needed no help. She had an excellent servant now, a German woman whom Mrs. Hinkel brought to her, who cooked and washed and did almost everything for so small a sum that when the amount was mentioned I fear me

there were women who were sorely tempted to offer the paragon twice as much to quit the Morgans and come to them, but they deserved the more honor that they promptly dismissed the unworthy thought. Connie said Mrs. Hinkel, too, was kind and useful in making things for the children, and Miss Franzen of the public school, who lived in the next block, took such interest in Lot and Billy and taught them so much. Why, they would really be in clover, were poor father only better. And then one evening when Schramm had ridden into town and left his horse at the Empire and had come promptly around to see the Herr Rittmeister, he was amazed to find a tall, gray-moustached, soldierly man seated by the captain's side, while there—right by Connie—in civilian dress stood a tall, slender young fellow at sight of whom the sergeant's eyes clouded, and he would have retired, but was too late, for with one leap Perry Thornton had him by the hand.

"Schramm, by all that's glorious! Father, look here!" And before the Prussian ex-hussar could realize it, a veteran colonel of dragoons was wringing one of his hands, while the lieutenant clasped the other. Nor would they or the Morgaus let him go.

"I have a letter from Berlin which I am charged to give you, Herr von Rhetz," said Thornton *père*, and at the name Schramm's lips quivered and twitched and he turned very white, but straight in the colonel's kindly face looked the unflinching eyes of blue.

Yet even then he would have asked to be permitted to retire,—the soldier in him shrinking from what he deemed intrusion, and a strange restless gnawing at his heart impelling him to go and leave them to the joy of a reunion in which no doubt he had really no place,—but, one and all, they forbade. Constance held in her hands two cabinet photographs, and Perry stepped forward, took one of these, and, holding it forth, said to Schramm,—

"If you need more reason, sergeant, here it is, for this is the picture of a young lady who says she must have yours, and quickly too."

"The young lady is most gracious, Herr Lieutenant,—and most beautiful," said Schramm, studying it attentively; then, glancing up, "The lieutenant's sister?"

"Not quite," laughed Perry, blushing, "though that's what my sisters are beginning to call her—rather prematurely."

And then in his perplexity Schramm gazed past the handsome boy and sought Connie's face. It was beaming. "Pardon," he said, "I am so dull. Does the lieutenant mean it is his betrothed?"

"Yes, and we are here to drink her health,—we five."

For one moment Schramm's eyes sought doubtfully the eyes of the maiden who stood there so unflinchingly and smilingly before them, and then his hand went out in earnest.

XVI.

A winter of unusual severity was that which followed upon the heels of a summer campaign that had been full of lively excitement for Tintop and the regiment. Once more, however, the spirit of

social gayety was abroad, and the Christmas holidays were merry with many a charming function. Hops, germans, dinners and luncheon-parties, theatricals, minstrels, and soldier balls, day after day and night after night, were in full career at Ransom, while dense and blinding snow-storms blocked the roads and soon succeeded in making the trip from fort to town more of a venture than the winter passage of the Atlantic. Starting from town with sunshine and sleigh-bells, one might encounter storm and tempest before half the distance was traversed. December, though sharply cold, had been bright and beautiful until about the 15th; then came the succession of blizzards that cut communication almost entirely and caused a wail of dismay from the shopkeepers of Butte, most of whom had laid in goodly store of toys and trinkets for the delectation of their best customers, the people out at the fort. The stage had to be taken off, and for days the mails were carried to and fro in saddle. The doctors, senior and junior, found plenty to do at the fort and little to tempt them elsewhere, so their visits to Morgan became infrequent. There was just one man at the post whom no gale could daunt, no storm could conquer, and that was Schramm.

Every one knew that Morgan was slowly growing feeble. "He ought to have gone to the Hot Springs long ago," said the doctor, "but now it is too late." He could not stand the journey without special attendants and accommodations, and those were things he could not, and Uncle Sam would not, pay for. Knowing that he would have nothing to leave, and deeming him near dissolution, his creditors were hounding him again. If he lived, the fifty dollars per month would gradually pay them off, but if he died there was nothing: hence the renewed clamor for immediate settlement. The weather was bitter, the little house cold and draughty, fuel was horribly expensive, and there was the veteran dragoon, a helpless cripple, looking death in the face and imploring him yet a little while to hold his hand, not that the broken-spirited soldier might recover his strength,—he was past all that,—but that he might linger on even in labor and sorrow, that with his annuity he might save his children from utter destitution. Hours he sat in loneliness, for it was impossible, save at rare intervals, for his old comrades to reach him now. He wondered how Connie could sing so happily about the house. Surely she and Bertha, the middle-aged maid-of-all-work, had accomplished wonders with the little sum he could devote to household expenses. Lot and Billy looked hearty and rosy and well fed and clothed when they came tumbling noisily in from school. Connie's sweet face and slender form were rounder. The dark circles under the big brown eyes were gone. Here he was, hardly daring to eat, thinking how soon they might be left without bite, sup, or cent. Yet Connie smiled and sang, and was picking up little household words and phrases in German, and blushing accosted Schramm in his native tongue when Schramm came, as he rarely failed to come, twice, thrice, or oftener during the week, to pay his respects to the gnädige Fräulein, and to see what he could do for the Herr Rittmeister, who, ever since the day of the Thorntons' coming, had vainly protested against the further use of the name Schramm, had insisted that the time

had come for the German sergeant to drop his punctilious observance of the deference due all superior officers, and had informed Connie that he should be addressed as Herr von Rhetz; but it was all to no purpose. Schramm forbade. "I left my name with my past when I came to enlist in this army," said he. "I had to win a future for myself, and so took my mother's name meantime. Call me by that so long as I wear the blue." Indeed, he couldn't bear to have the gnädige Fräulein address him as "sergeant" at all. He said that from the first he loved to watch her lips as she struggled with the combination that finally gave utterance to a Sch-r-r-ramm. There could be no question that he loved to watch her lips, no matter what she might be saying, and small blame to him either.

But out at Ransom Schramm was becoming a notability in earnest. Despite his plea to Colonel Thornton to keep secret as yet the story of his difference with his stern old father, his retirement from the German service, his practical banishment from home, and then the proffered forgiveness and reconciliation, there were so many suspicions that the Thorntons were plied with questions they could not altogether dodge. Every one knew by this time Schramm had money in plenty, and that it was deposited in a German bank in the East. "Yes," said Thornton, "that was his mother's fortune, which had become his own;" but the colonel refused to tell more, saying the soldier had a perfect right to serve out his time as Schramm and nothing else. Everybody saw, however, the courtesy and distinction with which the Thorntons, father and son, treated him,—Perry, in fact, waxing hot and wanting to fight an ill-conditioned, cross-grained subaltern who sneered at him. Schramm's box was kept in the vault of the First National now, where the cashier and other officials would fain have treated him with greater deference than they showed his officers, had Schramm permitted it. He would never enter the bank when an officer was there, and should one happen in, even the veriest cub in the whole garrison, Schramm would spring back from the counter and stand attention and at salute, never presuming to come forward again until the shoulder-straps had vanished. This naturally gave umbrage to the public, which, very properly, preferred moneyed sergeants to mortgaged subs, but no one at the post could truthfully say that Schramm ever in the faintest way failed in the respect and deference due his superiors in grade.

On the other hand, there were those who saw that Schramm's new captain was taking frequent opportunity to treat the young German with scant courtesy; it was apparent from the moment of the return of the troop from the field. They had already begun the homeward march when Schramm was ordered by Tintop to await their return to head-quarters, but Captain Bragg declared that Schramm had shirked his duty with the troop. The medal of honor awarded him was presented by Tintop and pinned on Schramm's breast in presence of the whole command, and Bragg sneered at the colonel's commendatory remarks, and sneered again in Thornton's presence as the troop marched in from parade. Perry was already disgusted with having to serve longer in D Troop, but no transfer could be obtained. Schramm's duties in barracks and stables were most scrupulously performed, but

never to the extent of winning expression of satisfaction from Bragg. Schramm rarely asked to be excused from duty, but often put in for a pass to go to town. There was no good reason for refusing so good a man, so Bragg growled and grumbled, and finally said he couldn't have his horses ridden all over creation, and Schramm must walk thereafter or hire a coach-and-four. Schramm never by word or sign showed irritation. He received the blunt, ill-natured reply with silent salute. He hired Curran's buggy, and then, an evening or two thereafter, just before stables, came loping back from Butte on a splendid bay, Lieutenant Edwards's favorite horse, which that officer had vainly asked three hundred for when he needed money to go East on sick-leave, and failing to obtain his price had sent him to the Empire stables in town. Schramm, it transpired, had bought the entire "outfit," equipments and all, but had the bridle and housings stored and replaced by modest black leather and dark blue blanket. Bragg forbade his keeping the horse in the troop stables, and Schramm, flushing slightly, replied, with the utmost self-command and respect, that he could not presume to think of such a thing. Mr. Curran had kindly consented to take charge of his horse in his private stable, where Schramm, you may depend upon it, paid roundly for forage and grooming. Then it next transpired that Schramm had named his new acquisition "Rand," and, as Rand in his capacity as inspector-general had frequently rapped Bragg over the knuckles, this gave greater offence to Bragg. Then a famous opera-company, crossing the continent, struck a blizzard and were snow-bound in a special car at Butte. There was a big hall with a fair-sized stage in town. The owner urged a performance, and the manager agreed to give "Faust" on a guarantee that took the owner's breath away. He braved the drifts, however, and galloped out to the fort and told his story. "Go ahead," said Tintop. "You shall have the band, and we'll all take seats." But when he heard the price, Tintop retracted. "We can't stand the figure—that is, I can't, and few of my officers can." Nevertheless the owner found means to give the front row of the gallery, all around, at a reduced rate, and there the fort contingent looked down on the two-dollar seats in the so-called parquet, and just before the overture began in marched forty sergeants, cavalry, infantry, and staff, from Ransom, each man in his nattiest dress uniform, and took possession of the rows of chairs reserved for them, and after the opera was over did these non-commissioned officers adjourn to Conway's, where another bountiful supper was spread in his big room, and then back to the fort in the dawn of the frosty morning to the tune of soldier songs and merry sleigh-bells. "Schramm's stag-party" was the talk of the post for a week thereafter. Bragg thought it an outrage that enlisted men should be allowed to sit in public entertainment in presence of their betters. Tintop, on the contrary, said he was proud to see so many of his men intelligent, soldierly, and so thoroughly capable of appreciating such music and such a company. As for the opera people and the local manager, they were enraptured. Connie, you may be sure, was there to see. She and her friend Miss Franzen had been brought thither and taken home in a carriage from the Empire, and invited and

escorted by the principal of the public school, to whom, it transpired later, tickets as well as instructions had been sent beforehand, and it was just about this time, just before Christmas, that somebody started the new name for the blue-eyed Prussian, and Schramm, to his manifest concern, was hailed as "Sergeant Cræsus."

The snow blockade was such that many children at the fort lost their faith in Santa Claus. He who rode the snow-drifts and the storm was barred at Ransom, yet seemed to swoop in force on Morgan's fireside. Brand-new sleds were there for Lot and Billy, and another doll, and such stacks of furniture and boxes of leaden soldiers, besides valuables of more practical sort. All these, together with fruits and candies to be stuffed in their worn stockings, had been smuggled in through the kitchen and the connivance of Bertha, and with them were some costly books, Schramm's gifts to his honored captain and brown-eyed Connie. He dared not offer half what his heart longed to lay before them. They had a Christmas dinner, too, that Bertha swore was her own production and inspiration. They had remembrances from the fort that Schramm "packed" in on horseback. Perry Thornton and others had by no means forgotten them, and Schramm had blushing called upon such kind friends to say he should be only too glad to carry in anything they might wish to send. There was no lack of Christmas cheer, even where one heart was so heavy as poor Morgan's, and no one was allowed to dream how very much of all this holiday feasting was due to Schramm. And so all through the long hard winter, patient and reserved, assiduous in every duty at the fort, yet finding frequent opportunity of visiting his friends in Butte, Schramm held his way. Old Hinkel was made an ordnance sergeant along in March, and with his wife and olive-branches took departure for a far southern post, Schramm seeing them to the train and receiving tearful warmth of blessing from the honest frau by way of good-by, and in April the doctors made more frequent trips to town, for Morgan rallied but little with the lengthening days. It was evident that no bill of relief could bring lasting benefit here.

But, despite pain and hopelessness, Morgan clung to life with great determination. Live he must for the babies' sakes, he said, and once more now his days were brightened by visits from old friends, once more in the sunny afternoons Perry Thornton dropped in for checkers and campaigns or to show a new picture of his lady-love, Connie sometimes sitting contentedly by, but generally busying herself with Bertha about the house. And then, just as was sure to happen, came the order for summer's work. "Away to the Big Horn!" said the colonel, as he reined up one day at Morgan's open door, catching Schramm in the act of blocking out a flower-garden for Lot and Billy. And that evening before parade the regimental adjutant, seated at his desk, was surprised by a visit from Sergeant Schramm, who begged of that influential officer a few moments' interview.

"Young man," said Tintop to his staff officer, as he espied the latter tripping around from the club-room just before first call, "that's the third time I've seen you coming out of Curran's since four o'clock." To which Gray promptly replied,—

"Yes, sir. You see, last week you remarked upon my going in there so often that I thought it time to reverse the process." And this afforded the colonel the opportunity of giving Gray the good raking down he deserved, and, just as Gray had hoped and planned, brought on the reaction that always followed an outburst. That evening Tintop came over to the office to "make it up," and then, when the skies were cleared, Gray broached the subject of Schramm's interview. It seems he wanted a fortnight's furlough to go to New York and other points on urgent personal business, and had reason to know that Bragg would forward the application disapproved; and Bragg did. Bragg's endorsement read, "This young soldier has been the recipient of so many indulgences already as to seriously impair his usefulness as a sergeant. He succeeded in evading field duty with the troop last fall, and seeks to shirk it again. For a man not yet two years in service, he has been promoted over older and more deserving men so rapidly as to turn his head." And Tintop considered the whole thing a reflection on him as regimental commander, and so sent for Bragg and so told him, and said, furthermore, that if Bragg didn't like Schramm and could find one man in the whole regiment who was willing to transfer to D, now that Bragg was its captain, he would be glad to order an exchange; and this gave Bragg the opening he hoped for and a chance to reply that, so far from wanting to get Schramm out, his remarks were conclusive proof that he was only striving to keep him in. It was hot shot, give and take, for ten minutes, a warfare in which it must be owned that Tintop rejoiced even though he did not excel, and it ended in his ordering Bragg to leave the office and coming in, all in a towering rage, to ask Gray if he ever in all his life knew such a cantankerous ass as Bragg,—“unless it's me for letting him rub my fur the wrong way.” Gray said that he really didn't like to draw invidious comparisons; but Schramm got the furlough, was back at Ransom in ten days, and caught the regiment before it camped in sight of Cloud Peak. He had a long conference with Bertha before he left, and his good-by to his captain and Connie was very brief. The day after he left there drove up to the door a low-wheeled phaeton that Connie instantly recognized as Mrs. Amory's. Mrs. Amory was the wife of one of the officers of the Eleventh, who, with her children, had gone back to visit their Kentucky home as soon as the regiment was ordered away, leaving the phaeton for sale. Bertha came in with a note addressed in Schramm's peculiar cramped and precise hand:

"Will not the gracious Miss Morgan do me the very great honor of the occasional exercising of the horse and carriage which must be left at the Empire stable during the summer without other use? The groom will call each morning for the orders of the gnädige Fräulein, whose acceptance will much honor and deeply oblige both 'Rand,' at her service, and the gracious lady's

"Most humble and grateful

"SCHRAMM."

And when the doctor happened in and found Connie with tear-brimming eyes and saw through the situation at a glance, he said it

was an inspiration. On those smooth hard roads, in that low, couch-like, soft-rolling carriage they could give her father air, sunshine, a sight of the distant mountains, a look at the old fort, an occasional visit to the now neglected grave. Constance took "Rand" on a preliminary spin, and found him, as was to be expected, perfectly bridle-wise and reliable, and between Dr. French and Bertha the dear old daddy was presently bundled in by her side, and the only mar to the exquisite joy and harmony of that sunshiny morning was the indignant howl of Billy-boy on their simultaneous return, he from school, the elders from their blissful drive.

And now frequently in the fair June weather they came bowling out to the garrison, Morgan contentedly reclining in the phaeton and chatting with old friends among the infantry officers, while Constance ran in to see Mrs. Woods and other lady friends who had been so kind to her in their dark days, and often they drove to the neglected cemetery, and the mother's grave, adorned now with simple head-stone, was put in order, turfed and trimmed, and often decked with wild flowers. But there was greater surprise in order. A letter from Aunt Lottie said their uncle had business requiring a visit to the far West, and that she would come with him. And they came, and spent two days in Butte, and Aunt Lottie urged her brother-in-law to make an effort and move to the East, for Connie's face was a fortune. "She will fall in love with and marry some penniless officer if she stays here," said the experienced woman of the world, and was aghast when Morgan calmly answered that he hoped she would, if the man was of the right sort, as only in the army had they found friends in the days of their sorest need. As for himself, he looked forward to the time when he could be laid away by Carrie's side. All he prayed for was that his children might not be left destitute. Already, indeed, two young gentlemen at the post, subalterns of Rhett's battalion, were noticed casting sheep's-eyes at Connie's lovely face, and were beginning to be assiduous callers at the little house in town, but Constance seemed to have no thought for any man but father. Aunt Lot went East again with distinct sense of defeat, but her husband took matters less to heart. The doctor had assured them that the long journey was hardly possible, and that Morgan would do fairly well until winter again set in, and then, "Should anything happen, Connie," he said, "you must come to us."

But Connie's reply was politely indefinite. Something did happen late that autumn, and Connie did not go.

XVII.

Letters came only at rare intervals and by roundabout and devious ways from the command in the Big Horn, but early in September there was news of interest. Sergeant-Major Hunter, covered with service chevrons and scars, took his honorable discharge and final papers and went into department head-quarters as clerk. Tintop and Gray had talked the probabilities over and were fully prepared. To

the wrath of Bragg, the grumbling of a few who disapproved of giving first prize to a two-year-old trooper, and yet who would equally have criticised any appointment Gray could have made, but to the outspoken satisfaction of nine-tenths of the regiment, Sergeant Schramm was named sergeant-major, the senior non-commissioned officer of the Eleventh. Modestly he accepted, for already his colonel and other officers had bidden him look even higher. "You are on the road to a commission," said Perry Thornton, when the young German came to tell him of the offered sergeant-majorship and to beg the Herr Lieutenant's kind advice. "I only wish the commission might come in time for you to stand up with me. Congratulate me, Rhetz: the wedding is to be in December."

One chilly October afternoon Connie had driven Mrs. Woods into town after a brief visit to the fort. Daddy was ailing again since the frost set in, and beginning to house himself still more. She had left her friend at Mrs. Whaling's, and, turning "Rand" about, was spinning up the main street towards their home at the westward skirt of town, when, striding along in front of her, slender, erect, in the most immaculate of yellow stripes and chevrons and a natty blue uniform, she caught sight of a well-known form, in an instant had reined up at the curb, and her glad voice, eager and joyous, rang with the old name.

"Schramm! Why, when—how did you get here?" she cried, throwing down the reins and holding forth her slender hand. The street was full of people, and who that saw could fail to note the sudden flash of delight in the face of the soldier addressed? Instantly he whirled about, sprang to the curb, and was on the point of clasping the proffered hand, when as suddenly he seemed to remember, straightened up instantly, raised the forage-cap from his curly blond head, and answered, respect, homage, admiration in his fine blue eyes,—

"Only this morning, gnädige Fräulein. The adjutant and I were sent in by way of Green River. The regiment is marching home."

"Oh, father will be so glad! Have you time—can you run up to see him now?"

"Assuredly, Miss Morgan. I was on my way there."

"That's simply lovely. Come, let me drive you now. You can't imagine what pleasure 'Rand' has given us all." And, edging back to the right side of the phaeton, she eagerly made room for him beside her. Schramm flushed to his very eyes.

"Oh, gnädige Fräulein, I thank you, but I could not. I will come—Pardon! I must stop on the way. Please drive on, Miss Morgan. It cannot be that I should drive with an officer's daughter." And, seeing rebellion in her eyes, he abruptly turned and strode away. He reached the little home only five minutes behind her, but the next day and the next "Rand" stood unused in the stable. "It's your own doing, Schramm," she said, with flashing eyes, when at last he meekly came to ask why she would no longer honor him by driving his horse and phaeton. "If there is any military impropriety in my driving you, there's every impropriety in my driving your horse and phaeton." And argument was useless. She refused to enter it again. This was

the first break. Then came a second. On three occasions within the ten days after his return, the sergeant-major, calling to see how fared his captain and the family, found Lieutenant Renshaw, a very presentable young infantryman, seated in the little parlor. Once it was Renshaw who opened the door. At sight of him the soldier had become rigid, like a pointer. His inquiries were made on this occasion with hand at salute, and he faced about and left at once, but Constance pursued and caught him at the gate, and Renshaw, watching from the window, saw him at attention, punctilious as ever, and saw that Constance was pleading. She was flushed and ready to cry when she came back. Schramm came seldom now, and Renshaw more frequently, and the third winter opened in chill and gloom.

Thornton came to say good-by just before Thanksgiving, and went blissfully away to his wedding, leaving Renshaw haunting the invalid's room and swearing to himself at Connie's ceaseless household duties. He began to realize that she was actually striving to avoid him, and so did Morgan. One night Morgan called her to him and gently, fondly began to plead with her. "He has asked my consent, Constance. He is a gentleman. He loves——" But she would hear no more, and with a burst of tears fled to her room. Poor Renshaw was told that Constance could not listen to any proposal: she would not leave daddy.

"But daddy must soon leave her," the father urged again, "and then what is to become of you and Lot and Billy? Renshaw said he would only be too glad——" But here the slender white hand was placed on his mouth, and further words were impossible.

He took it sorely to heart, did Renshaw, and he said some ill-advised and peppery things the day of Mrs. Fenton's tin-wedding reception when waltzing with Connie down the long hall. "If nothing but a German baron will suit, why, I suppose you can have him; but the least the fellow can do is to wait till he gets his commission, and not be——"

But he never finished. With one low cry of "Oh, shame, Mr. Renshaw!" she tore away from him and into the dressing-room.

It was just dark that evening when the ambulance from the post landed her at their door, and Mrs. Whaling, who had matronized the little party of town girls, drove on with her brood. Connie stole, as usual, to her father's side to bend and kiss him and murmur some fond inquiry. But pent-up indignation, the strain and misery of the long ride during which she had been compelled to listen to brainless sallies and congratulations on Renshaw's devotion, all proved too much for her. No sooner did she feel the father's arms around her than her girlish strength gave way, and she lay sobbing on his breast. There was the sound of a rasping chair, of some one striving to hurry from the room, but she did not hear. "He—he dared to speak of Schramm!" she cried, "of Schramm, who—who is truer gentleman—truer hero—than any—any—any officer they've got."

And the shadowy form striving to find means of exit from the tiny den in which reclined the invalid and his clasping, sobbing child was that of Sergeant-Major Schramm, who, all unnoticed and unseen by her, was thus become the hearer of his own perfections. Renshaw's

hapless outburst had proved his own undoing and swept away the last barrier to his rival's approach. "The least he can do is to wait till he gets his commission," indeed! After Connie's outburst it was more than mortal man could do to wait at all.

L'ENVOI.

It seems very long ago, that bitter winter in the heart of the Rockies, yet one of the old regiment, enjoying with his wife and children the first blissful taste of foreign travel, stood one exquisite summer morning on the forward deck of the oddly-modelled "dampfer" that was churning the blue-brown flood of the Rhine, and thus replied to the query of his better half:

"Know her? Why, you'll know her instantly. Connie can never grow old." Yes, rounded indeed is the sweet face of the woman standing with her soldierly husband close to the railing of the landing under the beautiful, vine-clad heights ahead, her soft brown eyes fixed in eagerness upon the approaching steamer. The slender form we knew in the shabby old black serge is almost majestic in its proportions now, yet how fair and sweet and smiling is the dear, bonny face once so piteously sad amid the snows of far-away Ransom! Happy wife and mother,—the idol of her soldier-husband's heart,—the "gnädige Fräulein" whom he won in distant America long years ago had speedily found her way into the love of the old retainers of the ancestral home to which, summoned to succeed the stern old father whose last words and thoughts were for his banished son, he bore her so soon after the last volley was fired over Morgan's head as they laid him away, as he had prayed, by Carrie's side. He died without a lingering fear for the children's future, one hand clasped in faithful Schramm's. The commission had indeed been tendered, but gracefully, courteously declined because of family duties at his old home in the fabled Rhineland. Again he wears the uniform of his famous corps, all the better officer for his experience in the American cavalry. Already Lottie had cut a wide swath among the bachelor subalterns of the hussars before finally bestowing heart and hand and a Schramm-provided *dot* upon a totally different party, though an eminently sound one. Already Billy has won distinction (as a skylarker and *schläger* and all-round scapegrace) at Heidelberg, where he sports a yellow cap and a monocle, a straggly moustache, and some ridiculous slashing scars, of all of which he is inordinately vain, and with genuine American enthusiasm he prattles of "my brother-in-law the baron," who laughs at his stories, chaffs him about his duels, quizzes him as to his scientific attainments (for Billy, be it known, is going back to America this fall to offer his services to capitalists as an expert mining engineer, and says for the first year a salary of five thousand dollars will do); but the Herr Graf pays his debts and provides his pocket-money, and the only secrets Connie does not share are those concerning her hopeful brother and his affairs. As for Connie herself, she is happy as the years are long, happy as even an army girl deserves to be.

THE END.

A NEWSPAPER SENSATION.

[JOURNALIST SERIES.]

THIS is a narrative in defence of what is called "only a newspaper sensation." It is not romantic. Any interest its details may possess is merely gruesome. But it may teach a lesson; a lesson to those who cast aside a kaleidoscope of the world's doings in the previous twenty-four hours without one thought of the wizard-like genius which has unrolled the panorama before them at the price of a pauper's blessing; without one thought of the perfectness of the picture drawn by limners in every country of the world, speaking divers tongues, drawing their inspiration from countless sources, with quick thought of criticism if the minutest blemish appears.

The "newspaper sensation" has almost invariably as its object and effect the righting of a public wrong. It is generally the child of much thought, careful judgment, untiring industry, painstaking investigation, and unselfish labor. The example which is herewith given by way of illustration occurred while I was city editor of a certain journal, and is selected only because it well demonstrates the care and patience given to the preparation of a newspaper story before it breathes its life of a day.

In a well-known hotel there was employed a brewer of potent liquors named Jim—or James Carson, when in his Sunday clothes. His skin was brown, his never-failing smile could cure dyspepsia, he was a gladiator in strength, and yet he had a rarely equalled touch in the building of a mint-julep. To every jolly old fellow, and young fellow too, who walked the promenade ten years ago, Jim, above all other members of his race, was really a man and a brother. Jim died one day, and men rich in purse and high in position, and of the race that had held his fathers in bondage, stood uncovered beside his coffin. They have never since tasted a mint-julep that they have not grumbled and spoken of Jim.

A few days after the funeral I was standing beside a cigar-case in the hotel, when one of two young men who were passing out exclaimed to an attendant, "I saw Jim last night," and as the couple reached the door both turned and laughed uproariously. Only one "Jim" could come in my mind at that time and in that place, and therefore I asked, "Who are those young men?" The answer, "They are medical students from Dash College," set my head throbbing. I said nothing. There was possibly much in the thought which now agitated me, probably nothing. No one had heard even a rumor of grave-robbing in the city for many years. It seemed incredible that a famous medical college, whose trustees included the first men in the town, could be engaged in the infamous crime of violation of sepulture. Yet the words of the students were very significant.

If the wrong existed, it was evident that its exposure meant a

laborious, difficult, and serious investigation, in which it would be foolish to engage without a more substantial basis than what might have been nothing more than the jest of two lively lads. To put a watch on the college might prove nothing, as dead bodies, whose sacrifice to science was authorized by law, were brought to the institution daily. A certain test was employed. A reporter was sent to the college for the ostensible purpose of preparing what is known in newspaper parlance as a "special" article—as distinguished from a current news article—upon the mysteries and methods of dissection. He kept aloof from all professors, as otherwise alarm, if there were reasons for it, might be created. He chatted quietly with a number of students, learned how "subjects" were allotted to them, how many they were allowed a year, and what number of students operated upon them. In this way it was possible to make a closely approximate estimate of the number of human bodies used in one year.

At that time—this was ten years ago—corpses for dissecting purposes could be legitimately obtained only from certain fixed sources, chiefly the Coroner's Office and the Almshouse, and they were apportioned among the various medical colleges by a board appointed for that purpose. It was an easy task, therefore, to ascertain, from the various sources referred to, exactly how many bodies were sent to this college yearly. A comparison of figures revealed the surprising fact that its students were each year plying their knives upon about two hundred more dead bodies than their institution could have legitimately received. The jest of the two lads evidently had some meaning.

It might appear that the easiest solution of the problem which now presented itself was to open Jim's grave, and, in case his body was found missing, to demand an explanation from the college officials. Yes, that would have avoided a great amount of trouble. That is what detectives would have done, with the result that there would have been a momentary show of public indignation, no one would have been punished, and in a short time the old evil would be following its customary rut. The newspaper which had now engaged in this investigation was determined that a great wrong should be righted, that the guilty should be punished in order that their fate might deter other malefactors, and that such an exposure should be made that law-makers would be compelled to seek some method whereby the demands of science and the observance of public and private rights would not be brought into conflict.

To solve the problem whence came the extra corpses used in the dissecting-room was not a simple task. Of course it was known where "Jim" had been buried, but it was not certain that all the stolen bodies came from one graveyard, and therefore it was determined to keep an eye on the college. It had a large drive-way leading from an extremely narrow, rarely utilized alley-way into the building itself, and guarded by a sliding door. Opposite this, on the other side of the little street, is—or was then; I don't know whether the tidal wave of high license has swept it away or not—a charming little tavern.

I hope the first of those two adjectives will not be taken amiss in these severe times. I have Ben Jonson's authority for there being

"nothing which has yet been contrived by men by which so much happiness is produced as a good tavern." The little place I have reference to was not a saloon,—for that word brings up visions of many mirrors and pyramids of glass-ware and waxed moustaches and white jackets and a glistening bar and noise and rush. It was simply a tavern; a cosy den in a secluded street, with a sideboard at one end, an open fireplace, tables and chairs scattered about, and the walls covered half-way to the ceiling with India matting. Its master was a big, jolly Englishman, and his wife and assistant was a *petite*, plump, black-eyed Frenchwoman. The place was supported almost entirely by medical students from the big building across the way. They were there morning, noon, and night, sucking, as though their lives depended upon the result, at the long clay stems of real English "churchwardens,"—the cigarette craze was then in its infancy,—attempting to fill out the cavities thus made in their cheeks by frequent draughts of beer; and while smoking and drinking each embryo saw-bones endeavored to imagine himself desperately in love with the Englishman's pretty wife, who had a smile for every one. At night she toasted sardines or her husband grilled kidneys in a subterranean apartment.

Into this retreat one night sauntered a reporter. In a short time, after the manner of the ablest of his kind, he was on intimate terms with Sir Boniface, and had made madame blush with delight by the warmth of the praise which he bestowed upon the toasted sardines he had ordered. But ever his ears were alert to hear the sound of wagon-wheels in the little street without. No matter how boisterous the scene within the tavern, the noise of a vehicle cannonading its way over the rough surface of the alley could not be drowned, because that thoroughfare is one of the many which by their cobble-stone pavement give the town distinction among cities. But there were no wagon-wheels heard that night. The worthy couple, in whose sight the reporter had found favor in his guise of a law-student, and who appeared to consider him excellent company, talked volubly upon any subject except the college. To the suggestion, laughingly made, "I suppose some nights they take in across the way many a poor fellow whose head-stone now tells a lie," the Englishman stolidly, without a change of countenance, said, "I'm blessed if I know," and the vivacious Frenchwoman uttered a little scream and exclaimed, "What for you talk about such hor-ree-ble things?" So that was a water-haul. As they long afterwards candidly admitted, "We knew which side our bread was buttered on."

Next night and next a reporter was sent to the little tavern without result. Different men were detailed upon each occasion, lest the immediate reappearance of a stranger might arouse distrust. On the fourth night at about half-past eleven the wheels of a wagon were heard in the little street. The tavern was crowded with medical students. One imprudent fellow shouted, as he raised his glass in air, "The first trip of the week. Here's to a heavy load." Instantly there was a general clinking of glasses, amid much laughter, and the toast was drunk with enthusiasm. The reporter finished his mug of

beer, quietly arose, and sauntered towards the door. Before he reached it a keen-eyed student stepped lightly towards it, turned the key in the lock, put it in his pocket, and then, turning to the indignant newspaper man, said, most courteously, "I am sure, dear sir, that, being a gentleman, you will willingly comply with a rule of our coterie and the house, which requires that promptly at half-past eleven o'clock every night the door shall be locked for a few moments and no one permitted to depart or enter until we have drunk a toast to Madame Mignon, with whom we are all in love."

It was a clever lie, and well told. The reporter could hear the big door in the college building opposite sliding in its grooves; he could hear the wagon turning into the drive-way. But he was helpless. Even if he had demanded and secured release, he would be too late to see what he wished, and, besides, his action might engender suspicion, which it was vitally important should not be aroused. So he turned quickly about, and, with a smile on his face and a pain in his heart, expressed his fervent approval of the delightful custom in which he was permitted to participate, and his voice was the cheeriest as he lifted his foaming beaker on high and shouted, "Madame Mignon!" When he left the tavern the little street was dark and deserted. Not a light gleamed from the grim building across the way.

After this misadventure the watch was continued from the shadow of various small streets and courts which cross or open upon the little alley-way, forming a net-work between two highways. Meanwhile it was discovered that from an unlighted thoroughfare only three feet wide, which divided the high wall of the college from the buildings in its rear, a narrow window high in the wall gave light and ventilation to the court-yard into which were driven all wagons bringing anything to the college.

After this discovery, two men, for reasons which will appear, were put on watch. When they had continued this irksome duty for five nights they were rewarded by hearing, when midnight was fast approaching, the rattle of a wagon in one of the small thoroughfares leading into the little street. They had scarcely time to hide themselves when a heavy uncovered express-wagon went by at rapid speed. Three men sat on the driver's seat. The horse came to a halt before the drive-way leading into the college. One of the men sprang to the ground, applied a key to the door, and then shoved it back. The wagon was driven in. The door closed with a click. Blessing the absence of policemen and the boisterous devotion of the medical students, whose revelry they heard, to Madame Mignon and their pipes and beer, the two reporters noiselessly ran into the narrow thoroughfare in the rear of the college and stood beneath the little window, through which a faint light now gleamed. The stoutest man set his feet apart, squared his shoulders, and placed his hands upon his knees. Upon his back sprang his companion. As the under man gradually rose, the upper one cautiously placed his feet upon the shoulders of his support. Then both men stood erect. The man atop looked through the window. He uttered no exclamation. His trained eyes took in every detail of the scene.

This is what he saw: a wide, high-ceilinged court-yard paved with bricks and slate; three men busily engaged in removing a heavy tarpaulin which covered the contents of the wagon, revealing the naked bodies of four negroes. With brutal jests the corpses were dragged by the heels to the pavement and then thrown into pickling-vats standing by. The light was so dim that the faces of the men could not be clearly seen. Their movements were expeditious. In a few minutes they had turned their horse's head about, opened the door, closed it, and disappeared through the labyrinth of small streets with a dash that forbade pursuit.

One end of the chain was in hand. But who were the criminals? Whence came the bodies? It was reasonably certain that only a cemetery where colored people are buried was the scene of the grave-robbers' work. There were only two graveyards of that kind in the city, and these were carefully watched; yet the espionage had to be of a character which would not create alarm. There were weeks of ceaseless watchfulness; nights of lying prone behind tombstones, wrapped in rough rubber coats as a defence against the heavy dews of spring. Some folks might not call it a pleasant duty, and yet those engaged in it were possessed of as much enthusiastic earnestness as if they had life and fortune at stake. I mention these minor details in the hope of conveying some idea to the outside world of what is frequently represented by a newspaper article.

It finally became evident that robbers paid ghoulish visits to a certain cemetery in a remote part of the city. It is—or was then—in a lonely region, among truck farms and with very few houses near. It appeared almost impossible to get near enough to the men to identify without alarming them. It was necessary to connect them with the college in order to have the crime fully exposed. It became apparent that some one opened the graves and removed the bodies before the wagon appeared upon the scene. That vehicle never made its appearance before eleven o'clock. It was never within the cemetery longer than five minutes. Then it came away with a rush, the horse frequently at a gallop. There were always three men on the seat.

In the cemetery was a small structure whose architectural device plainly showed that it had been intended for a chapel. At that time, however, it was occupied by the custodian of the graveyard, a mulatto,—let us call him John Jones,—who therein had set up his possessions, consisting chiefly of a wife, children, and dogs, the children being few and small, and the dogs numerous and large. It was learned that his brother Louis assisted the superintendent in digging graves, but did not live with him in the chapel-building, going to his home in the centre of the city. Once or twice a week, however, Louis remained for supper, and it was found that these displays of fraternal affection took place whenever the wagon visited the rounded mounds of the cemetery. The inference was naturally that the Jones brothers were the actual resurrectionists, and the other robbers merely transporters of dead freight.

Myself and a companion made frequent efforts to crawl upon the men while at work, but the barking of their dogs gave warning that

our approach would be detected. In this dilemma an expedient was adopted which proved successful. One night after the wagon had entered the gate-way of the cemetery two of us stationed ourselves some distance down the road, and when we heard the wheels of the vehicle crunching over the gravelled road-way—the still night air and the absence of dwellings permitting the sound to be carried a considerable distance—we both rolled up the highway arm in arm and boisterously engaged in simulating a hilarious state of intoxication. The horse was being driven at a clipping gait. As it neared us, we both, while singing in a maudlin way, staggered into the middle of the road, timing our movements so as to almost come in collision with the animal, trusting to the driver pulling the horse back upon his haunches. That is exactly what he did. This incident led to loud curses on one side and drunken apologies on the other. But it gave me time not only to mentally photograph the men's faces, but also to read on the side of the wagon the name "John Jenkins," and the address on Blank Street of that enterprising expressman. On the seat were Louis Jones and two white men whose acquaintance I made later.

I had a pair of fast horses and a carriage near by, and they carried myself and companion to Dash College a few minutes in advance of the robbers. The secluded window furnished me with a post of observation from which I saw the wagon enter the building, accompanied by the two white men. Louis Jones had been dropped somewhere on the homeward journey. The tarpaulin, when removed from the wagon, disclosed four dead negroes.

The chain was now complete. The rifled cemetery, the place of disposal, and the criminals were known. All that remained was to capture the robbers without any other newspaper obtaining possession of the news, for, while the object of the investigation was certainly praiseworthy, the journal conducting it, naturally, did not wish any rival to share in the result of its labors. Consequently it would not do to take police officials into the secret, the inevitable result of which would have been their mounting the house-tops and proclaiming to the city their vigilance and acumen. In order, therefore, to have authority for the arrest of the criminals, a warrant was secured from a magistrate whose secrecy could be absolutely relied upon, and I was sworn in as a deputy constable, with power to serve the paper. But when all these arrangements had been completed, the robbers suddenly ceased their labors. The pickling-vats of Dash College were filled, and the term would soon come to an end.

Then ensued an anxious wait for months. I was determined that the men should be captured on their first trip in the autumn, and began the watch on the first day of September. Now, however, Jenkins's stable was the place under surveillance. Every night until eleven o'clock there were keen eyes upon it. This was continued all through September and October and part of November: the college had started the fall season with an over-supply of cadavers. Finally, at eleven one dark night the watcher reported that the wagon had left the Blank Street stable, with Jenkins and a companion upon the seat. It must be borne in mind that the Joneses had the ghastly burden

ready by this time. To effect the capture, therefore, required quick action.

The prearranged programme moved like a piece of oiled machinery. Two closed carriages with good horses were in readiness several squares away from the newspaper office. Into these hurried the companion of many of my journeys, four reporters, and myself. The secrecy with which the affair had been conducted during all these months may be judged from the fact that three of the reporters knew nothing of the mission they were starting upon, although they had been on the city editor's staff during all that period. But it didn't take long to instruct them.

The drive was a rapid one. The horses and carriages were hid in the darkness of a clump of trees, and the six men walked down the road towards the cemetery, nearly half a mile away. This was the plan of operation agreed upon: to attempt to capture the robbers in or near the cemetery would probably permit the escape of Superintendent Jones and also alarm the occupants of a farm-house near by, who might summon the police. It was important that the arrests should be made without the knowledge of the police; in fact, to kidnap the robbers, if you please, but with full legal authority, as I still held my warrant and my deputization as a constable. Therefore a lonely place on the road, with no house near by, but lighted by a gasoline lamp, was selected as the scene of action, and here it was intended to stretch a rope across the road, tied from the lamp-post to a tree. This, it was hoped, would cause the horse to stumble and permit us to rush in upon the resurrectionists.

But it was destined that the efficiency of this plan should not be put to the test. We had not yet reached the designated spot when we heard the rattle of a rapidly-moving wagon. For a moment we were all sadly perplexed. We could not act like highwaymen and stop every wagon that travelled the road. In the distance we saw the shadowy outline of a gray horse. The robbers had always driven a bay animal. There was no time to arrange the rope, even if we had dared. But action had to be quick and decided.

"Three of you walk on the other side of the road, and two walk on this side. If you hear me cry out, two jump to the horse's head, two to the rear of the wagon, and one to a position opposite me." As these instructions were given, each man was designated by name for his place. Men like these didn't have to be told twice. I quickly determined upon a repetition of the seeming-drunkenness tactics which had been successfully employed the previous spring. As the horse approached at a quick trot I lurched across the road as if intending to join the men on the other side, and to avoid running me down the driver was obliged to pull on the reins quickly. That gave me my opportunity. I looked up, and saw Jenkins's evil face gazing down upon me. In an instant a cocked revolver was pointed at his head, and as I shouted, "Hands up! Drop those reins," every man sprang to his post.

The robbers were taken completely by surprise. Before the driver could strike the horse, two men held the animal by the head. Louis

Jones turned a complete somersault backward and over the tail-board of the wagon, only to land in the arms of the two waiting reporters. Jenkins came sullenly down from his seat, and a steel bracelet was placed upon one of his wrists; then his helper was invited to alight and manacled to his employer. When the tarpaulin was lifted, six dead bodies were found in the wagon, which was placed in charge of two reporters, who mounted its seat proudly.

Then the strange procession marched towards the place where the carriages were waiting. No inquiring policeman who would have telegraphed the news to the Central Police Station was met, and the robbers were safely escorted into the carriages, after I had taken from Jenkins's pockets the keys of Dash College and a large knife.

All that now remained to make the feat a complete success was to keep both the quick and the dead in hiding until next morning, when the newspapers should be upon the streets. The dead bodies were covered up and driven to the hotel stables, a reporter keeping guard over them and explaining to the hostler in charge that the musty odor of his load was due to the fact that it consisted of stolen furs which the police had captured. The three robbers in the closed carriages were driven boldly down-street and past a score of reporters standing in front of the Central Police Station, waiting for "something big to turn up." The prisoners were locked in a room previously secured. Before daylight I had gone back to the cemetery with a companion, arrested the superintendent, and conveyed him to where his fellow-robbers were. At daybreak, after some trouble, I violently induced the remaining resurrectionist to accompany me to the same place. All this was done without the slightest knowledge of it reaching the police or other newspaper men. The first intimation they had of it was when they read a three-page account of it in the paper which conducted the enterprise. A few days later, at the instigation of the trustees of the cemetery, a warrant was issued for the arrest of the demonstrator of anatomy of Dash College, Jenkins having confessed to his participation in the conspiracy.

That practically ends the tale I have tried to tell. The robbers were sent to prison for long terms. The demonstrator of anatomy, for reasons not necessary to discuss at this late day, was acquitted.

For what good was all this?

The Legislature made a law whereby medical colleges and dissecting-rooms are now amply provided from legitimate sources with all the cadavers they need, every part of the community contributing its unclaimed dead, and to-day there is no violation of sepulture in the State.

That is what was accomplished by "a newspaper sensation."

Louis N. Megargee.

THE SPRING IN THE DESERT.

I STOOD all alone in a desert, my life
 All stripped of its freshness and parched in the strife
 Of existence. Around and about, on each hand,
 Like the waves of the sea, swept the sinister sand,
 Its limitless bosom all flecked, here and there,
 With the bones of the dead, stricken down by despair.
 Not a shrub, not a tree, broke my far-reaching gaze,
 While down on my head shone the pitiless blaze
 Of the fierce sun above me. The slight breeze, that fanned
 My temples, could scarce stir the atoms of sand.
 Alone in the desert! Ah, lives that have known
 In your bright days no sense of that dread word, "Alone,"
 Ye little can guess how the demons of hell
 Can invent no dire torture will suit them as well.
 Alone in the desert! How long, O my God,
 Had I lived there alone? On the sand which I trod
 The footprints of many another had pressed,
 And had left me behind them, all unknown, unguessed
 The yearnings I had to retain one to tell
 Me the way to the spring that they all knew so well.

Ah, one draught of cool water! In all the past years
 The liquid I quaffed had been bitter with tears;
 But to-day I was weary; my storm-beaten soul,
 For once in my life, seemed to mock at control,
 And had centred its strength in one passionate cry:
 "O God! give me drink, or allow me to die!"

There came a soft touch on my shoulder. Again
 I came back to existence. How long I had lain
 Unconscious, I knew not; nay, only I knew
 The deep wells of those eyes that were looking me through
 From out of a face which, like mine, bore the brand
 That sorrow stamps in with un pitying hand.
 I heard but the voice, with the sad, mournful ring
 In the tones: "I am thirsty! oh, where is the spring?"

Thank God for the question! my proud soul uprose
 As a giant from slumber, refreshed by repose,
 So strange was the query. The dark days of yore
 Had never brought one who had asked it before.
 With all the fierce power the long years had brought,
 I had still been the seeker, but never the sought.
 Ah, ye whose fair lives nothing grim has dismayed
 Cannot dream of the joy that one sole call for aid
 Can give to the soul whom the world has passed by
 As too proud to implore, and too stubborn to die.

He stood there before me. A chill, sad surprise
Crept silently into the weary, deep eyes
As, ere my dry lips could frame answer, my heart
Had met his with a joy never, never to part.
I saw, though his life was scarce older than mine,
Like myself, he had drunk to the lees of the wine
That youth only enjoys. And the past he had known
Had left him, like me, in the desert—alone!
No longer I cringed 'neath the blaze of the sun,
But stood there erect, like a knight who had won
The prize in the tourney. My heart was his own,
And never again could I be all alone.

Once more my soul spoke, in a passionate cry:
"O God! let me find him the spring ere I die.
For myself I ask nothing, but, O God above!
Oh, grant me the joy to save him whom I love!"

One is very near God in the desert. The cares
Which humanity chokes one up with unawares
In the rush of the world, sink to nothing. Our prayer
Can rise clearer to heaven, be listened to there—
Ay, and granted. For ere this fierce rush of my tongue
Had ceased from the words it so fiercely had flung
In the face of high heaven, one bowshot away
The treasure we sought for so yearningly lay.
No mirage was this, but the diamond unwrought
That, blind fools as we were, we had passed while we sought.

O God! while existence may linger on yet
In the ages to come, I can never forget
How sweet to see soften that face, as he quaffed
All he wished, ere I solaced my lips with one draught!

He was happy. Forgotten the woes of the past
With the dread of the future, my soul lived at last;
And over our heads, as together we bowed
To drink from the spring, came a silvery cloud,
And, lo, from its bosom, as slow it drew near,
Unseen though the speaker, these words reached my ear:

"In the desert of Life, in the kingdom of Pain,
Where ye wearily strive the lost path to regain,
Remember one talisman, cling to it there,
Be it the foundation of suppliant prayer:
Ye who plead unto Heaven for aid from above,
Know the best of all prayers is the service of Love."

Mercy Hart.

WHEN HESTER CAME.

[LIPPINCOTT'S NOTABLE STORIES.—NO. X.*]

MRS. MASON stood in the middle of her kitchen, ruefully eying the specious semblance of cleanliness which a certain odor belied, and of order which tell-tale evidences peeping from corners and from behind things proclaimed a sham. It was a hot August morning. The night had not left a vestige of dew behind it. Instead, there was a sense of irritating dryness in the air, such as is usual during the drought of a Texas summer. Mrs. Mason felt ill. The thought of mixing biscuit and frying steak for breakfast seemed unendurable. A feeling of useless indignation swelled up within her at the thought of the wicked defection of Caroline, going off without a word of warning, and leaving the load of housework to fall suddenly on her weak shoulders. She hated cooking. A sense of degradation took possession of her in the society of pots and kettles and dish-rags. Tears came into her eyes at the thought of what was before her. The leaves of the cottonwood-tree outside whispered just then, and for a moment her heart leaped with the hope that it had begun to rain. She went to the window; but no: the heavy clouds hanging so low, as if they might at any moment drop moisture and coolness into the alkaline air and upon the white dusty earth, were there only to tantalize her. A Gulf breeze would spring up presently and bear them all off to the north, and the dry, pitiless sun would have his way all day long, just as he did every summer day,—and she would be there in that furnace of a kitchen.

At that moment, like a dispensation of Providence, Aunt Martha came through the back gate. She carried a small, rusty, and bent tin bucket on her arm, and went around the kitchen towards the cistern.

Mrs. Mason called to her from the door-way: "Oh, Aunt Martha, don't you want to hire?"

Martha stopped with her knobby old hands on the cistern-rope. She was a tall, bony old woman, very wide, but hollow and sunken, as if she had suffered from a perpetual hunger. The face she turned up to Mrs. Mason, standing above her in the kitchen door, was wide and bony and hollow too; and the hard dry skin, which had once

* With the March number began the issue of this series of short stories, of which this is the last. The stories will be reprinted in a small volume, and the royalty on the sale of this book will belong to the author of that one of the ten tales which receives the popular verdict.

To determine this choice, our readers have been invited to signify each month, by postal card addressed to the editor of *Lippincott's Magazine*, their opinions as to the merits of the short story in the last issue. Those who thus report as to each of the ten tales, from March to December inclusive, will receive, free of charge, a copy of the collected edition of "Notable Stories." *All reports must be sent in before the end of the year.*

been black, was overlaid with a kind of transparent grayness. Her hair was gray likewise,—as gray as the dingy white strings that wrapped the twists. Little dim eyes looked out from withered sockets under bushy gray brows. Whatever the color of her limp, ragged gown had originally been, it too had now faded into the general grayness. But if she had been the trimmest maid that ever tripped, Mrs. Mason could not have waited more eagerly for her reply.

"Well'm, I dunno," she said at last, dispassionately.

"Oh, you'd better come on and hire to me to do my cooking," the white woman said, persuasively.

Aunt Martha let go the rope, and gave herself to the consideration of the question.

"Well, you see, Mis' Mason, I nev' likes ter und'mine innnybody. Whar Calline?"

"Oh, Caroline!" Indignation for a moment interrupted speech. "Why, Martha, the no-account nigger just took herself off some time in the night, or soon this morning, without so much as saying, 'I'm gone.' Her month was up yesterday and she got her money. Why couldn't she let me know? Why didn't she give me a chance to get somebody else? It's a shame; that's what it is. Something ought to be done to servants that go off that way."

Martha looked pained; but Mrs. Mason needed soothing.

"Well, well, well," the old woman said, slowly, each syllable expressing a deeper shade of sympathy than the last, "I dunno what do make our colah do so. Now, me, I nev' does dat a-way——"

"Well, I'll tell you. It's these good-for-nothing free schools. I've never yet seen an educated nigger that was worth shucks."

"Yas'm. Some ob um do seem ter be gittin' too high larnt."

But why thus beat uselessly against the wall of fate? Mrs. Mason returned suddenly to the question more easy of present solution.

"Well, Martha, don't you want to hire?" She tried hard to keep the note of entreaty out of her voice, but the other woman recognized it.

"Well'm, Mis' Mason, I dunno ef I kin suit you."

"Oh, pshaw! Can't you make biscuits and fry steak?"

"I rickon so."

"Can't you cook vegetables and make good light bread?"

"Well'm, I dunno how *good*. I nev' likes ter say whut I kin do; 'kase, you see, you might be dis'pineted. De bes' way is let people fine out deyse'f, en make no promises. Den dey kain't say I made innny 'greemints whut I kain't come up to."

And so, after this non-committal fashion, a bargain was finally struck. Mrs. Mason left her in possession of the kitchen, and escaped gladly. A sudden thought made her turn back, however, as she crossed the porch to the dining-room.

"Oh, there's one thing, Martha. If you've got any idea of going to the cotton-patch, I want to know it in time. I don't want you going off, like Caroline, with the first wagon that comes along from the country."

"No'm, Mis' Mason, I nev' does so. I wuz civilize' raised. I ain't no fiel'-niggah. I nev' goes to de cotton-patch. I kain't stan'

de sun like common niggahs. You see," she went on, with a certain dignity, "I wuz raised up right in de house wid de white folks. I ain't nev' spent a day in de fiel'. My ole mis' she sot a heap o' sto' by me, she did. Yas'm, you may bleeve me or not, Mis' Mason, but my Fathah knows I'm er tellin' de trufe, ez sho' ez I'm er stan'in' heah, my back's ez smooove ez youahs. I ain't nev' had a bresh to it."

She was a clumsy and unskilful creature, as time proved; but the gentle courtesy of her manners atoned for a multitude of culinary sins. Her manner was a queer mixture of self-respecting dignity and anxious deprecation. She forestalled criticism by the perfect faith which she proclaimed in her own virtues. She seemed unconscious of any lack in herself; yet there was that in her big, bony, pathetic old face which seemed to ask continually for consideration. It was not that any suspicion ever occurred to her that she was not fulfilling her duties with perfect success; it was that Mrs. Mason seemed to her scantily endowed with the quality of appreciation. She met this situation with the same gentle philosophy which had so far borne her calmly through a long and joyless life. All unconsciously she adopted towards Mrs. Mason the soothing, patronizing tone she might have used to a wilful, ignorant child. And Mrs. Mason, never before overawed by any sense of delicacy in dealing with servants' short-comings, found it impossible to do more than approach her old handmaid obliquely when she felt compelled towards remonstrance. Such interviews, however, might as well never have been. They always ended in Martha's justification:

"Yas'm, I always does de bes' I kin. My old Mis' she brung me up keerful, en I ain't nev' forgot her instructions. I ain't make much mirations 'bout it, but I sho' does de bes' I kin. Nobody kain't do no bet' den dey kin. My ole Mis' she brung me up not ter be nary eye-sarvint."

Mrs. Mason went out of the kitchen disarmed every time. She wondered at herself with a fretful impatience, as the household reins upon which she had hitherto managed to keep a slack hold finally slipped entirely from her weak hands into those of the old black woman. The mistress was a sickly woman, and often complaining. Martha had an abundant sympathy for every pain. The highest courtesy was her aim; perfect agreement with the mood of the companion of the moment was her conception of the means to that end. Truth was mere brutality; it played no part whatever in her scheme of life. To her secret heart the pain might seem slight, but her sympathy rose to the full measure of expectation. This was how she came in a short time to be a necessity to Mrs. Mason. She was so soothing. She agreed with every sentiment, and lent herself to every mood. Her "yas'm" punctuated the entire conversation. Her rich, soft voice was in itself a ground for friendship. It went gently up and down in confidential inflections which made Mrs. Mason half fancy sometimes that it was the very voice that had crooned lullabies to her infancy. It was a happy state of affairs, that might have gone on indefinitely but for Hester.

It was in the first talk they had about Hester that Mrs. Mason believed that she discovered the guiding spirit of the old woman's life. Social respectability was the god she bowed down to; to be received by the negro aristocracy of Sand Hill was the goal of her ambition.

"Yas'm," she explained to Mrs. Mason on this occasion, "de San' Hill folkses mos'ly has dey own houses, en owns hawses en spring-wagons. Time my li'l gal comes back, we gwine put ouah endev'mints tergedda and try git us a house o' we own. Yas'm, I got a baby-chile—leas'ways, she done growed up now, but I ain't seen her sence she wuz a baby-chile. Ole Mis' she had ter sell her off, time she uz two years ole, en I ain't seen her sence; but I done got wu'd to her 'bout a yeah ago. She'll be comin' 'long home 'gin I git money 'nough ter send fo' her."

"Was she glad to hear from you?"

"Well'm, she didn't, ez you might say, sen' de smile in de letta whut she writen; but ez neah ez you kin come ter puttin' de smile in writin', dat she did."

All the plans of her life seemed to have reference to the time when her "li'l gal" should come. She made such efforts to win favor among the Sand Hill folks as would have done credit to the most astute schemer who ever went up with her Western millions and her marriageable daughters to assail the portals of Fifth Avenue.

At night she took her tired old bones to church instead of to bed. It was the social rendezvous where she recognized the field of her opportunity. There you might have seen her at the close of the meeting extending a gentle but irresistible courtesy to the social magnates of her world. Her advances were often but coldly received, for she had none of the marks of the social elect,—neither house nor horse and spring-wagon nor brave apparel,—and there is no aristocrat so severely unapproachable as your negro aristocrat. But she would not be repulsed. She bade Brer Gregg good-evening with a fervency that would have been servile had it not been so entirely dignified. She asked Sist' Taylor why she hadn't been round to call, with a courteous hint of chiding which fairly compelled return in kind. She admired Sist' Viney's yellow daughter so unaffectedly that that haughty aristocrat felt bound in common decency to return the compliment by asking after Martha's own daughter.

"Well'm, Sist' Viney, I ain't heerd f'om her in a right smaht while; but she'll be 'long heah soon now. You mus' call on us, Sist' Viney."

"I'll do so, Mis' Rob'son,—mebbe so," Sist' Viney assented, with a cool reserve intended to hold Martha at a more humble distance.

With the end in view of placating that society into which she hoped to introduce her recovered daughter, Martha entertained her friends, when they called, with a hospitality plainly beyond her means.

"Have some refreshments, Sist' Calline," Mrs. Mason heard her saying as she passed a plate of cold biscuits to the group of visitors outside the cabin door one warm afternoon. A moment later, she was

offering a tin waiter laden with two broken pitchers, and inquiring, with anxious hospitality, "Would you choose watah, or would you choose milk, Mis' Swan?"

Mrs. Mason was so amused at the spectacle, which she enjoyed from the vantage of her back bedroom window, that she failed to notice at first that the refreshments were supplied from her own pantry. It was plainly her duty, she felt, to obstruct the pilfering propensities of the race in such individual members as came under her influence, and next day she undertook her mission. No thought of previous discomfiture occurred to deter her.

"Your callers seemed to enjoy your refreshments yesterday," she began. Martha started slightly, then answered, with her usual imperturbability, "Yas'm, dey did so. I always aims ter have a little sumpin' on han' when my frien's calls. But now dar Sist' Viney, she ain't dat way. Ef a pusson happen 'long, even 'bout meal-time, Sist' Viney des set still en ain't say nuttin', no mattah how long you stay,—des set still en meck out 'tain't meal-time wid um. Mos' ob ouah colah is dat way. Now, me, I nev' does so. I always offahs 'em a snack, even ef I ain't keepin' house. I gits dat feelin' f'om ole Mis'. She always say, 'Nev' let a gues' leave de do' onrefreshed.'"

Mrs. Mason went out of the kitchen after that, feeling like a culprit herself. She relieved her feelings later in the day by giving Martha a muslin gown several seasons old. The old woman's gratitude was excessive, her pleasure childish.

"I sho'ly does love good clo'es," she exclaimed, fervently. "Now I got sumpin' to weah when Hestah comes. She ain't gwine be shame' ob her ma."

Every circumstance of her life seemed to relate to this event. At the end of the month Mrs. Mason laid ten silver dollars on the kitchen table beside the dish-pan. Martha set aside two of them for the rent of the cabin across the alley, and—would Mrs. Mason, please, ma'am, write a letter and send the remainder to Hester Day, San Marcos, Texas? The money was sent. A whole month of expectancy went by, but no Hester came. Then another month's wages followed the first, with like result.

"Seem lak it teck mo' dan jes' money ter fetch her," Martha said, wistfully, at last. Then it came out that during the past year she had sent Hester all her earnings (derived mostly from washing), save a pittance for her own support; and after each remittance she had looked in vain to see her come.

"Have you written to find out about it?" Mrs. Mason inquired.

"No'm; I ain't wrote. My han's so stiff." In this day of education she was not going to acknowledge that there was any better reason.

"Well, I'm going to write. There's no sense in your sending off your money that way to goodness knows who."

"She done wrote awhile back dat she got ter git some clo'es fo' de chillun."

"Oh, the children!"

"Yas'm; she got some."

"Well, then, where's her husband?" Mrs. Mason asked, maliciously.

"She ain't say."

"How many children are there?"

"She ain't say dat needer."

"Well, I'm going to look into this thing."

"Yas'm; please, ma'm. My han's so stiff."

That evening Mrs. Mason said to her husband, "That old silly needs a guardian, sure."

Next morning she wrote to Hester Day, San Marcos, Texas: "If you really want to come on, I'll send you the money to pay your way; but if you don't come, it will be the last cent you get from me." She signed the letter, "Your mother, Martha Robertson." In the course of a week there came a letter written on a scrap of dirty paper. She needed eight dollars, and would start the day after the money reached her.

"Well, now," said Martha, delight smiling in every feature, "dat do fetch her, sho'. I'd ought to wrote soonah. Seem lak de chile need a strongah invite den whut I giv her."

"Yes," said Mrs. Mason, "I gave her the strongest kind of an 'invite.'"

The time of waiting for the "baby-chile," lost more than thirty years before, was drawing to a close, but each day now was longer than the one that went before. The most trifling circumstance became a reminder of the coming joy.

"That dress needs letting down," the mistress said one evening when Martha appeared in the old muslin gown, which was stiffly starched and stood out around her ankles so as to afford an unrestricted view of her large flat feet, bulging out of their dilapidated shoes. "You don't want to be exhibiting those old door-mats of feet quite so generously."

Martha laughed with delighted appreciation of the joke. "It do need lenkenin', sho'," she said, "but nemmine. I'll have my li'l gal fix it, time she come. Young folkses dey knows de fashions bettah."

And another day, "Martha, can't you make a peach cobbler out of those few late peaches on the tree by the stable?"

"Well'm, I ain't braggin' on dat peach gobblah o' mine. You des wait now twell my li'l gal come 'long. She boun' ter know dem fixin's. Young folkses dey keeps up wid de times bettah. You see, I been a-washin' so long, I'm gittin' right rusty 'bout fancy cookin'."

It will never be forgotten how she beamed on the congregation of the African Methodist church that Sunday afternoon before Hester was to arrive. She gave a decorous attention to the sermon, and joined in singing the hymns with apparent fervor; but all the time her thoughts were reaching forward eagerly to the end of meeting, and to the social hour that followed under the live-oaks outside.

She announced her daughter's coming right and left, when the coveted hour came. She asked everybody to call, particularly those members of the congregation whose social standing made them especially tempting to her respectable soul. If her advances were received coldly

in some quarters, she seemed unconscious of the fact. No rebuff could leave its impression on her elastic spirit, that day above all other days.

"Sist' Viney mighty scawful sence she got her spring-wagon," murmured Martha's crony, Caroline Clemens.

"Yas'm, Sist' Viney tollable scawful," Martha agreed, "but I bleeves in scawfulness. Dat de ondliest way ter keep you haid up." And then, in a more confidential tone, lest her vaulting ambition should bring condemnation upon her too aspiring soul, she said, "My li'l gal gwine be scawful, too."

In truth, the more chilly Sist' Viney's manner, the more courteous and ingratiating Martha's. As for Brer Israel Whitlock, who owned a farm, and drove in to church on Sunday behind a pair of ribby horses attached to a rattling old buggy, Martha's courtesy to him reached a climax.

"You mus' call 'roun', Brer Whitlock. Me an my li'l gal 'll be please' ter 'ceive you,—mos' please', indeed."

"I'll do so—some time—ef I'm a parsin' in yo' paht o' town, Mis' Rob'son." The magnate had a lofty way about him that gave Martha inexpressible delight.

"Yo' li'l gal may'ied?" asked Brother Gordon, the minister,—a bachelor bent on conquest.

"She's a widdy, Brer Gawdin," Martha answered, smoothly.

"Yo' li'l gal look lak you, Sist' Rob'son?" the minister pursued, with interest.

"Well, I ain't see her sence she's a baby-chile, Brer Gawdin; but she favah her pa las' I seen ob her. He uz a brown colah,—not black as me."

"Des so: she ain't one er dese yere no-nation yaller niggers," loudly exclaimed a very ebon old woman on the edge of the group, at which several light-colored ladies sniffed indignantly, and Martha said, ingratiatingly, "She's a heap brighter'n whut I is, I rickon."

"Well, people," remarked Caroline Clemens, poising for departure, "I boun' you Sis' Mawthy gwine git so biggity 'gin dat li'l gal git heah, she ain't gwine notice nobody, less'n dey San' Hill folks."

Martha's deprecating smile included everybody.

"No'm, Sist' Calline," she said, raising her voice above its usual soft key, "I ain't gwine git biggity. I ain't dat way. I des thankful ter git shed er dis here lonesomeness." But, in spite of her denial, there was easily noticeable a new dignity added to her usual self-respecting bearing. The group under the trees melted away, and Martha also took her departure.

"Mawthy walk lak she gittin' young ag'in," Rhody Simpson said to old Angeline Brooks.

"Mawthy hed right smaht heap o' hahd times," Angeline answered, looking after the old woman as she took her way along the street, which led steeply down-hill from the tree where the gossips stood. "Seem lak ev't'ing go ag'in' her. Her fust slav'ry-time husban' he done sol' off f'om her, an' her secon' he lef' her time freedom come, an' it seem lak no man ain't tuk up wid her sence. She des live 'long by herse'f, always a-honin' ter fine dat li'l gal."

"Well, ole Mahstah done 'membered her at las', po' ole critter. I'm right glad she gwine git shed er her lonesomeness lak she say. It sho' been de dahk o' de moon wid her a mighty long time."

The wonderful day did really come at last,—the day of Hester's home-coming. Martha's smile dawned before the sun. The biscuits burned in the oven, and the waffles were leather; but everybody was so dazzled by the cook's joyful countenance that trifles like these passed unremarked. After breakfast she took her stand by the kitchen window while she wiped the dishes, and intercepted every passing acquaintance, regardless of color, that she might communicate her joy. As the day wore on, she seemed to lose the stateliness usual to her, and grew somewhat childish in her delight,—so much so that Mrs. Mason, for the first time in their intercourse, felt no compunction in addressing to her a good-natured but disrespectful rebuke.

"You Martha, you," she called shrilly to where the old woman hung over the fence pouring out her soul to Caroline Clemens, "you better be looking after that dinner in yonder. You've about forgot white folks have to eat, haven't you?"

Martha hastened in with a cumbersome trot, intended to be playful. "I sho' is 'stracted dis day," she said, with a foolish laugh. She found a hundred excuses during the afternoon to climb painfully up to Mrs. Mason's room, where she lingered to talk over the event to which nearly thirty years of her life had been a prelude. It was to no purpose that Mrs. Mason reminded her with a teasing laugh that she could not possibly imagine her daughter as she must truly be.

"She isn't any child, you old silly, you," the mistress said; "she isn't even a young girl. She's past thirty, and she's got goodness knows how many children."

Martha's imagination had so long roamed in an opposite direction, it could not compass facts like these. "I spec' she's little en roun', lak Sist' Viney's gal. Her pa he 'uz a short plump man." He was the husband who had put off his matrimonial bonds at the same time that his country loosed the shackles of servitude; but Martha had lost the very memory of past sorrows. "I spec' she got an eye lak him too,—big en sof' lak. He 'uz a lakly-lookin' niggah, Josh wuz. Sist' Viney's gal had on a mighty pritty dress Sunday,—white wid pink ribbons round de waist en de neck. I gwine meck Hestah git some pink ribbons. I spec' she got a white dress. She take after me 'bout clo'es, I boun' you. I sholy does love good clo'es."

It was an autumn day, but the strain of expectation grew so intense before evening that it seemed longer than the longest day.

It was early twilight when Mrs. Mason stood at the window watching for Martha's return from the train with her new-found ones. They were so long in appearing that she began to grow nervous. "I declare," she said, half sheepishly, "I'm as worked up as if it was my own long-lost kin." At last, however, there appeared in the distance down the street a queer procession. It trailed along in the middle of the dusty roadway. Martha walked first. She carried a baby in her arms.

Behind her strode another woman,—the tallest woman that Mrs. Mason had ever seen. As they came nearer, the light from the west showed her to be of that lustreless, inky blackness which distinguishes negroes who lead an out-door life in the Texas climate. She wore a torn straw hat, cast off evidently by some man; and the unstiffened skirt of her dark cotton gown clung to her as she walked. A dwindling trail of children, regularly diminishing in size and of all shades of color, strung out behind. There were eight of them in all. The procession turned into the side street, and passed close to the window where Mrs. Mason stood; but Martha kept her gaze fixed straight ahead, and Mrs. Mason, struck speechless, did not attempt to call her attention. The children looked awed. None of them made a sound as they shuffled or skipped through the dust, except a very small one at the end of the line, who kept crying, "Wait fo' me! Wait fo' me!" But nobody paid any attention. The strange, tall black woman looked up curiously as she passed the window, and grunted out a half-greeting; but Mrs. Mason remained dumb, her gaze following them fascinated, till they disappeared within Martha's cabin, when she found voice to gasp, "Well, if anybody ever——"

She sat on the back gallery late that evening, straining her ears to disentangle the various sounds that came from Martha's cabin. An irresistible curiosity, born of a painful sympathy, possessed her. The rollicking sound of children playing was all that she could distinguish for a while; then that grew quiet, and she could hear Martha's low voice, rising and falling in gentle, well-known modulations. It was answered by a terrible, cracked bass voice, which might easily have belonged to a man, but which Mrs. Mason recognized at once as harmonizing truly with the appearance of the tall, lawless-looking black woman. It shocked her inexpressibly to think that this startling creature, with scarce a semblance of womanhood about her, was the "li'l gal," the "baby-chile," Hester. She almost laughed—but not quite—as she thought of Martha's fond picture of her in a white dress with pink ribbons, like "Sist' Viney's" little yellow daughter. She could not hear what Martha said. The soft, indistinct murmur of her voice did not resolve itself into words. But Hester's rose so loud that now and then whole sentences were audible.

She talked like an illiterate white person,—like a rude man, in fact. She seldom fell into expressions or pronunciations peculiar to the negro dialect. This was in itself a disturbing and unnatural thing to the listener. Hester's sentences began frequently with oaths, and sometimes she laughed uproariously. Her laugh, hoarse, mirthless, fierce, was more terrible even than the unfeminine tones of her voice in conversation. Mrs. Mason fairly shuddered with sympathy as she imagined Martha cowering under the revelations her daughter made at every breath. When it grew unendurable, she went in, wishing with pity that Martha as well could escape it so. As she closed the back door she heard Hester say, "You just bet I kin. The' ain't a cow-puncher from Mason to Angelo kin outride me, by God."

She was a sleepless, nervous woman at best, much given to wandering about the house at night when the bed became intolerable. To-

night she felt herself drawn repeatedly to the window that overlooked the alley, and—yes—there she saw her every time—old Martha sitting on a low flat stone beside the cabin, her gray head sunken, her long arms hanging limp between her knees. The full moon lighted all too plainly the picture of dejection that she made, sitting there without a sign of motion.

"Why *won't* she go in?" the nervous watcher asked fretfully, when, near morning, she peeped again at the still figure huddled on the stone. "I believe I could sleep if she'd just go in."

But she did not go in. The first cold ray of dawn found her there. The whistle of the ice-factory breaking out upon the stillness of the sleeping town aroused her at last, and she arose slowly, stiffly, and with a difficult gait hobbled towards the kitchen.

It was nearly a week before Mrs. Mason could bring herself to mention Hester. She went into the kitchen as rarely as possible, she and Martha felt so uncomfortably constrained in each other's presence. It was a painful week. The children swarmed through the kitchen all day like irrepressible hungry young animals, disappearing only at the rare sight of Mrs. Mason. Martha's troubled voice could be heard every few moments saying anxiously, "Don't touch dat, son," "Run 'long home, daughter," "You musn't do dat, honey." Hester sprawled her ungainly, half-clad body lazily on the back porch, or in the kitchen door. She did not offer to help her mother in any way, but the air was full of her terrible voice for hours at a time, gossiping idly. Now and then she went over to sit in front of the cabin and hail the strange negro men that passed; she never spoke to the women. The snatches of talk that came over the fence on these occasions were such that Mrs. Mason permanently closed the back windows.

Martha bore herself with a martyr-like silence; but the state of her mind was evident from the nervous way in which she stumbled about her work, forgetting things constantly, apologizing for her clumsiness with a new sort of humility which made Mrs. Mason wish that she would not, and growing more uncertain in her cooking with every meal. At the end of a week the situation was so plainly unendurable that Martha herself relieved the tension by saying, "You bet' git somebody ter teck dis place. I ain't no 'count no mo', I dat worried."

Then Mrs. Mason's pent-up feelings broke bounds. "Send the good-for-nothing thing packing," she burst out. "What do you want to worry yourself about her and her brats for? She isn't your kind."

"No'm, Mis' Mason, dat's a true wu'd; she ain't seem lak my kine; but"—and for the first time in a week she stood up with her accustomed straightness—"I gwine stick by her. She en de chillun dey de ondliest kin I got in de roun' worl'."

"You're a fool," the white woman said, vehemently. "She'll be nothing but a disgrace to you and a worry as long as you keep her round."

"Yas'm, she'll be a worrimint, sho'; but she ain't no disgrace; no'm, Mis' Mason; kase, you see, Hestah she ain't none o' my raisin'.

Dat man whut ole Mis' sell her off to, he a stock-man, en she brung up out yonder on dem perairies 'long wid cow-boys en cattle, an' she ain't had no mo' raisin' den one er dese yere wild steers. But"—and the first smile since she had first looked at Hester dawned—"I gwine raise dem chillun right. Belle she gwine be a little lady; she gwine be some o' *my* raisin'." She lost herself for a moment in her pleasing thought, then she said, "But I got ter stay home wid um. I kain't hiah out no mo'. You don't know nobody whut want washin' done, does you?"

She was in the greatest haste to be gone. She kept an anxious eye upon the street always, and one day when "Sist' Viney's" spring-wagon and emaciated horse hove in sight she collared a little grandson nervously, and, thrusting him outside of the kitchen door with his face set towards the cabin and the oncoming visitor, she said, hurriedly, "Run, son, run 'long an' tell dat lady dat Mis' Rob'son done moved 'way, you don' know where."

But the small darcy was saved the embarrassment of directly addressing the most gorgeous-looking lady of his own color that he had ever seen. Sist' Viney drove slowly past the cabin with her haughty glance fixed in cold amazement on Hester, who sat sprawled in the cabin door with a snuff-stick in her mouth. Hester returned the glance with fierce defiance, and Martha watched the scene in trembling agony from a crack in the boards that made Mrs. Mason's shed-kitchen. Sist' Viney passed on without stopping, and Martha breathed freely again; but, to escape further danger, she disappeared a few days later from the cabin in the alley, with Hester and the trailing procession of half-clad, variously-colored children. She was determined to escape from further sight of any one she had known, especially Sand Hill folks, for she gave such vague and misleading directions concerning her new residence that Mrs. Mason tried in vain to find her. Inquiry showed that she had not been to church since the Sunday preceding Hester's coming. So complete was her disappearance that Mrs. Mason would have believed that she had left town altogether, but that Caroline Clemens, who had taken the deserted place in her kitchen, said one day, "Seem lak Mawthy gittin' strange. She pass me Sunday ebenin', en when I spoken to her she ain't say a wu'd—des hurry by, en ain't even pass de time er day."

No more was heard of her for several months. Then one mid-summer evening Mrs. Mason, sitting on her front gallery, saw a tall dark shape in a flapping gown coming through the gate; a smaller shape hovered uncertainly in the darkness, like a shadow, behind the first, and finally effaced itself behind the gate-post. It was Hester and Belle. Hester stopped at the foot of the steps, and, without preliminary greeting of any kind, announced abruptly, "The ole lady's dead."

An exclamation of shocked surprise broke from Mrs. Mason; but almost immediately there arose in her a feeling of relief from the sense of fretful sympathy that had tormented her every time the thought of Martha came into her mind.

"I'm glad to hear it," she said, meaningly, after a moment of

silence. The implied reproach was entirely lost on Hester, who answered, calmly enough,—

"I reckon she ain't sorry herself."

A sniffling sob came through the dark from behind the gate-post. It did Mrs. Mason good to hear that sound. Hester continued, and her hearer thought she had never heard her voice sound so like a man's:

"I come to see if you wouldn't gimme a couple o' sheets to lay her out. The ole lady was gre't on style, an' I aimed to lay her out right. Bein's you all was such gre't friends, I thought maybe you wouldn't begre'dge her a couple o' sheets."

The tone of the request could not have been ruder, but there was something in the words that seemed unlike Hester. Without any reply, Mrs. Mason went up-stairs and took out two of her best sheets. There were old ones enough; but she tossed them aside. She wondered at herself, but she did not hesitate. As she came down-stairs, however, she said to herself that she would have no mistake about it.

"I want you to understand, Hester, that I'm doing it for *Martha*," she said, scarcely less ungraciously than the rude black woman herself could have done.

Hester burst into her terrible laugh. It had never sounded so harsh, so shocking, so unfeminine, as it did then, breaking out thus suddenly upon the soft summer night, full of the tender twitterings and chirpings and croonings of Nature in her gentlest maternal mood.

"Lord God A'mighty!" she exclaimed, "you needn't be scared I'll think you're a-doin' it for *me*. Nobody ever done me a real kindness in my life,—'ceppin' the ole lady."

Bride Neill Taylor.

THE TWO GRIEFS.

SHE smiles as if a merry dream had passed her;
The gold-red locks that frame her girlish head
Leap with warm life to meet the fire's bold kisses;
And she is dead!

Dry-eyed and haggard, hard with hopeless sorrow,
The mother sits, her warm heart turned to lead:
The child has been her life, her soul, her sunshine,
And she is dead.

Close to the casement creeps a trembling woman,
Sees the white maiden smiling on her bed:
"Oh, God!" she groans, "if MY child were but lying
"Sinless—and dead!"

Margaret Gilman George.

THE AUSTRALIAN RABBIT-PLAGUE.

IN the early settlement of Australia game was plentiful. Kangaroos of many sizes and colors roamed the island-continent. Other native animals, with fowls and game-birds, were found on the plains. But the game seen in the British parks and on the Scotch hills was not met in the Australian wilds. The English colonists desired some of the animals familiar to the British chase. An enterprising settler ordered a box of rabbits from England. Three pairs were brought by steamer, liberated in the Australian thickets, and admonished to multiply and replenish the earth. They were modest rabbits, and attracted but little attention for some seasons. On a continent of 2,900,000 square miles they were monarchs of all they surveyed; they had plenty of room for exercise, enjoyed unrestricted liberty of travel, and were but seldom seen. So rarely were the bunnies visible that they were regarded as curiosities and relics of animal life in the old country. The colonists wished the rabbits to become more common, and did not molest them. Their only enemies were the wild dingoes, the foxes, and other carnivorous creatures at large in the bush.

The rabbits made a start in the world, and, notwithstanding their losses by wild dogs and other flesh-eating quadrupeds, began to increase in the land.

Their powers of reproduction are well known, and in a few years they began to be observed in various districts. Their numbers made them an object of sport; guns were levelled at them and dogs were imported and set in motion behind them. Their flesh came into use. Its rarity made it an object of request.

As they continued to multiply, the wild dingoes were observed to be in improved condition, and the other carnivorous brutes became fat and plump.

But as the settlers became more numerous, and gardens increased, and wheat-fields enlarged their areas, the increased vegetable supplies had a marked effect on the rabbits; they became fat and strong. The vegetable and grain plots, however, presented a different aspect: the hitherto luxuriant ranches, after the visitations of the bunnies, looked as if they had been scourged by cyclones or visited by mowing-machines. The colonists discovered that they had brought in enemies unawares. No more boxes of rabbits were sent for.

As the bunnies continued to increase, the havoc on the crops became greater, and the destruction in orchards and gardens more general. The colonists became frantic with their grievance. They called a public meeting to consider the matter. After much argument, it was decided that either the rabbits or the colonists would have to leave. A crusade was organized against the intruders. Volunteers were enlisted and companies organized. The forces moved in mass on the animals. The rabbits moved in mass elsewhere. Their migration did not improve the condition of the adjacent districts, nor advance the

welfare of the neighboring settlers. The reception of the rabbits was neither cordial nor pleasant. Hostilities were declared in advance, and extermination began on their arrival.

On account of dangerous conditions and hostile surroundings, the rabbits formed resolutions of confederation, and banded themselves into herds for general security and private protection. The herds doubled and quadrupled within a few months. As their moving hosts grew they covered the plains like the locusts of Egypt, and swarmed along the borders like sands on the sea-shore. The great armies of bunnies finally numbered millions and tens of millions. They moved over the settlements in such masses as to devastate the farms, deplete the fields, and lay waste whole districts. The grass on the plains was eaten up and the pasturage destroyed; the track of the devastating hosts was left as barren as a desert. No sprig of grass was seen or blade of herbage left. The cattle were driven away into other provinces, or starved on naked plains. The flocks died or were removed from the pathway of the devouring plague. The grazing interests were no less injured than the agricultural.

The people found themselves powerless to cope with their raiding adversaries. Their forces were inadequate to the war. The increase of the rabbits surpassed the powers of computation, and their desolation was wide-spread.

The nimble legions passed to and fro over the land like an avalanche of destruction, consuming whatever came before them. The continent became checkered with the tracks of the roving scourge.

The colonists again assembled themselves. Their condition was desperate, their future most unpromising. The rabbits had possession of the land, and bade fair to take charge of the country. The attempt to exterminate the furry hosts had been like an attempt to sweep back the waves of the ocean. The more the people exterminated, the faster the animals increased. Rabbits reproduce when four months of age. They have eight little ones in a litter. They breed seven times a year. One pair and their offspring are estimated to produce in four years 1,250,000 rabbits.

To stem this Niagara of increase the farmers found themselves wholly incompetent.

They begged the colonial parliament to come to the rescue. The government was petitioned to make appropriations and introduce means of extirpation on a scale corresponding with the magnitude of the evil. The authorities of New South Wales took action. Parliament assembled. The rabbit question was called up for consideration. Measures were taken for its amelioration. A reward of one hundred thousand dollars was offered to any who would introduce any process or invent any method that would relieve the colony of its rabbits. The funds in the colonial treasury were pledged as security for the discharge of this obligation. The offers of the government won much attention. Companies, syndicates, and individuals in various and remote parts of the world gave the proposal consideration. An additional twenty-five thousand dollars was voted.

Pasteur in France found leisure to give the subject some reflection,

and thought he saw a way to accommodate New South Wales. He opened negotiations with the colony, offering to undertake the extermination of its rabbits by inoculation. The animals were to be swept from the face of the earth by hydrophobia. A few of them were to be inoculated and set free. These were expected to bite the healthy ones, and they in turn to fasten their teeth in their comrades, until by successive biting the entire rabbit population would be inoculated, and the land finally relieved of their noxious presence. The proposal was considered by the colonial government. Pasteur was notified to send on his experts and start operations. The specialists of the Parisian scientist arrived in Australia with their hypodermic syringes. The rabbits were on hand.

But inquisitive parties had some questions to propound. They wished to know, before observing the spectacle of a country covered with mad rabbits, whether the inoculated animals would not be eaten by dogs and thus communicate rabies to the canines. They wished to know, further, whether or not the dogs would then bite the sheep and cattle, finish up with the people, and afford the undesirable phenomenon of a continent where animals and people were alike afflicted with rabies.

Proceedings were suspended. Further objections were heard. The adverse arguments were considered sound. The Pasteur overtures were rejected. The colony concluded that it preferred to keep its rabbits and have its human and lower animals in their right minds, rather than risk indiscriminate hydrophobia.

The French experts returned over the seas with their hypodermic syringes. The bunnies continued to hold high carnival among the gardens and wheat-fields.

But the colony concluded to give the animals another turn. Parliament resolved to take them under the care of the government, and to provide laws looking to their future activity. If the animals would not be removed from the face of the earth, it was determined that they should be kept in motion. As rewards had not yielded results, it was decided to try the powers of home energy.

Assessments were levied on the districts infested by the rabbits, and an appropriation was made from the public fund of the colony to equip and prosecute exterminating schemes. Companies were armed with guns, mounted on horses, and started in pursuit of the bunnies with orders to slay all and spare none. Powder was exploded by the barrel, and lead scattered by the ton. But the pests continued to occupy the country. The Rabbit Nuisance Act, passed by the New South Wales Parliament in 1883, assessed the cattle- and stock-holders in the colony one cent per head for large stock and one-half cent per head for sheep, the assessments to go into the Rabbit Fund for the suppression of the nuisance. From the passage of this act to the year 1889, \$1,229,240 were raised by assessments; \$2,745,085 were expended from the General Revenue; and one million dollars were spent privately by the ranchers in the suppression of the rabbits. Nearly five million dollars altogether were expended on the crusade during the years mentioned.

The following table shows the amounts expended per year :

Year.	Assessments. £	General Revenue. £	Total. £
1883.....	490		490
1884.....	69,406		69,406
1885.....	46,926	88,128	135,054
1886.....	40,200	127,434	167,634
1887.....	47,518	161,228	208,746
1888.....	41,308	109,464	150,772
1889.....		62,763	62,763
Total.....	\$1,229,240	\$2,745,085	\$3,974,325

To which add one million dollars of private expenditure.

One hundred million acres of territory were overrun by the animals. Although the raiders killed 2,528,000 rabbits per year, and received a bounty from the government for each of the scalps, the rabbits remained in full force. But the great drought of 1888 excelled Pasteur's remedy and all the guns and canines in Australia. The lakes and watercourses were fenced in by wire screens, and the animals died by millions from thirst. Shutting out the water from the bunnies has been found the most successful weapon in all the arsenal of destruction.

Wire fences were the final resort of the colonists. It was seen that the only way to protect adjacent districts from invasion was to fence in the territory occupied by the rabbits. A fence, two hundred and seven miles in length, was constructed from Narromine, on the Macquarie River, to Bourke, on the Darling River. It was then continued to Barringun, a distance of eighty-four miles. The cost of the fences was four hundred and ten dollars per mile. Other colonies concluded to follow this example. A fence was constructed along the South Australian border from the river Murray a distance of two hundred miles, and then continued one hundred and forty-four miles to the northwest corner of the colony. Queensland also thought it needed some fences. One was built along the southern line of that colony for two hundred and sixty miles, to connect with the northeast corner of New South Wales. Another fence, three hundred and forty miles in length, was projected in New South Wales from Albury to Tranzie.

When these fences effect a connection with the other fences the rabbits will be surrounded, and their extermination can by military supervision be reduced to a system. Fences can be handled instead of troops. Raiders can move on the rabbits with wire in the place of arms. Fences can be used within fences. The screens can be advanced, shifted, and deployed to accomplish strategic ends and to achieve extraordinary slaughters. The wires have been put in training and moved on the animals with the most successful results.

When the rabbits are enclosed within small areas, shot and shell can be turned on them in convenient quantities. Dynamite explosions and electrical currents can also be used.

The colony now considers that its rabbit problem has been solved.

J. N. Ingram.

IN THE CAMP OF PHILISTIA.

THEY had just met over a tea-table, and the older woman opened the conversation. She was fifty and *petite*, with white hair rolled high upon a self-respecting little head. The brown satin which gowned her was of the richest quality and instantaneous in style, albeit otherwise far from new. Indeed, she would have delighted in telling you that there was nothing new about her, from her name to the medallion locket hanging from a piece of velvet ribbon about her thin throat, surrounded by very yellow and very real lace.

"I am so glad you are to assist," she said to the younger woman. "I poured at the Yellots' on Monday, and there was no one to talk to except the people who crowded up for tea. No one, I mean, with whom to converse; and I do so love to be near one congenial person. I'm a perfect sensitive."

"How do you know that I am a congenial person?" asked the younger one, smiling.

"Oh, I know all about you, my dear, from Mrs. Harwood. As soon as she met you yesterday, she was wild to secure you for to-day, before any one got ahead of her."

"She is very kind——"

"And she raves about your unique style: so I knew you as soon as you entered. You look *different*, you know."

"I fear it is because I *am* different," said the younger woman, a little doubtfully. "I have been in town only two days: so this is really my first experience."

She stood straight and tall, her glance taking in the long rooms and the incoming callers; a figure whose outlines would have been solitary except with natural surroundings; a figure in whom a psychologist might have traced the tradition of centuries back to the Greek arena and its possibilities for triumphant exultation; or one whom a latter-day painter might have placed at the edge of a field of ripened grain, with nothing behind but the blue of the morning, and nothing beyond but the wonder and expectancy of youth,—a look young David may have worn when he faced Philistia.

"It is, of course, strange to me," she continued.

"Not at all, my dear; you have *presence*! My friend Mrs. General Knox used to say,—you know, the General Knox who was minister to some unpronounceable place,—'Fannie, if you only had repose, *presence*, you would be a social success; but you are *such* a hopeless chatterbox!' Poor thing! She was one of those excellent women who always say just what they think. And the general would say, 'My dear, let Fannie alone; little women could run creation!' She was *such* a large woman! Between you and me, I *was* a social success, though, without the presence; while she went off somewhere and got caught and killed in an earthquake, poor thing! Yes, *very* sad! So tragic! Now wait; before you sit there just let me advise you. I

have helped so many girls through their first season that I have the privilege of a chaperon even if I *am* a spinster."

"But I'm not a *débutante*," said the younger woman, as she sank upon a low seat drawn half-way behind the table. "This will be my first introduction here, but I am nearly twenty-four."

"Oh, don't, my dear! You only look twenty, and it's just as well not to start with your age known. No one was near, fortunately, except Bertie Armat, and he's two-thirds idiot. Going to sing, I suppose. Mrs. Harwood is so clever about securing features, and he really has an angelic voice."

"I do not mind, though,—about the age," said the younger woman, drawing a pointed green leaf between her fingers.

"Oh, but you must, you know! Of course it is natural that artists should be a little different,—quite the thing, indeed; but not *too* much so,—just artistically, my dear."

The other frowned slightly. "The true artist does not pose," she said.

"Of course not; only I must confess I like them better when they do just a *wee* bit, they make such charming features. Mrs. Harwood told me you are an artist."

"Yes."

"Now, that is simply delicious! I thought of course you would say, 'I paint a little,' or 'I could not aspire so high;' but you are so consistent! You carry out your style perfectly. Oh, that reminds me, I was going to suggest that you stand during the afternoon, my dear. You see, I have reached the age when one may be generous, and your white, classic lines are really perfect, and so is the side of your neck. The palms and red hangings back of you are just right, and this candle-light—you cannot imagine the effect, you wonderful creature! So, now, I am going to pour while you hand the cups and look unusual."

The younger woman laughed softly. "But I have stood already half the day over my work."

"Oh, never mind that. And, pardon me, why do you call your art 'work'?"

"Why not?"

"Well, it puts it on a level with toil and—a—drudgery, and all that. The idea of you knowing care or work! My dear child, if I had the head of a Psyche I would not care if I had nothing in it!"

"There was little enough in Psyche's," said the younger woman.

"True enough; and, believe me, it is a great deal better so. Just *look* the artist all you can."

The other lifted her clear gray eyes. "You mean I should give up my art except as a by-play?"

"Oh, not necessarily, my dear; but keep your wonderful gaze and that creamy smoothness like a new-blown tea-rose, and *don't* get strong-minded and anti-matrimonial; the men hate it so."

The younger woman gave a sudden little laugh which rippled outward and caused more than one head to turn in her direction.

"Or say I am 'wedded to my art,'" she said. She had drawn off

her long gloves, and her eyes were resting upon a tiny ring like a thread of gold upon one firm, beautifully-shaped hand. The subdued light made caressing shadows on her bright hair, and a little smile trembled happily about her lips, while in her eyes lay a half-veiled joy as she leaned sideways to extend her hand to the other woman.

"You are the first person who has done any plain speaking to me, and I like you," she said.

"Thank you." The older woman put a cup of tea into the outstretched hand. "Give this to the first one. They are coming this way."

Several early callers strayed near, and after confused introduction stood about in groups drinking tea. After a while the speaker continued in an aside:

"Talking of artists, I suppose Jack Sherrard will be here. You know whom I mean? J. Dartmoor Sherrard?"

The girl beside her moved suddenly. "Yes," she said, "I know. He is very celebrated, is he not?"

"Lionized! Simply lionized. Just hand me that fan, please. Thanks."

"And you say he will be here this evening?"

"Yes, he nearly always calls here. Mrs. Harwood likes to secure him. He is quite a card, and so fascinating! Not just my style, though; probably because I have known him all his life. Very old family, you know; *frightfully* proud people, all of them."

"I will sit for just a few moments," interrupted the younger woman. "No one else seems ready for tea just yet." There was still the little happy smile about her lips, and an eager flush on her face, as girlish as if born of the same source as the smile. She drew nearer and said,—

"Now tell me about the artist, please."

"Why, of course. I forgot you were one too. How fortunate it will be for you to meet him! and I will introduce you, my dear. But I must warn you first——"

Here the other lifted her eyes again; the shadow of the palms fluttered across her hair like the wings of far-away birds, and deepened the beauty of her face.

"I have met him," she said, softly. "I have been among artists quite often, you know."

"You have met him! Dear me! and here I am telling you all about him, when perhaps he'll remember you!"

"Perhaps so; but go on: I really like to hear."

"And of course, meeting him professionally, you knew him professionally; but I assure you Jack Sherrard professionally and Jack Sherrard socially are two different beings. My dear, lay the sugar-tongs nearer, if you please——"

"Which is the more desirable in this case?" asked the younger, as she reached out her hand, and again the light shone upon the scarcely-discernible thread of gold, and again she smiled down upon it, as if it shared with her the joy of a secret.

"Well, I am quite satisfied with the social knowledge," said the

first, "for I've endured enough already in trying to defend him, just because I am an old friend of the family."

"In trying to defend him?" the younger woman spoke quickly: "his art, you mean?"

"Oh, dear, no; his art is supreme—in more ways than one, I fear. But I must not prejudice you in advance: that is very naughty of me."

"You cannot prejudice me, indeed," said the other; "but I do not understand." Something like a shade of pride, of resolution, of tenderness, passed over her face unnoticed.

"Oh, it's an open story, or I wouldn't repeat it. I am nothing if not discreet. My friend Mrs. General Knox used to say, 'Fannie, with all your chatter you do know what to withhold,'—which really is a gift, my dear."

"Yes, oh, yes," said the younger woman. "And I did not mean to ask anything personal about Mr. Sherrard; indeed, I would rather you did not tell me."

"Of course! You are quite right, and I shall not; but every one in society knows about Jack's victims. He is the most merciless flirt in creation. His path is fairly paved with broken engagements. Indeed, the termination of more than one has been fairly tragic!"

The other seemed to shrink back a little, then she said,—

"You may be mistaken: he did not impress me as that sort of a man."

"Why, my dear, I have known Jack Sherrard all his life. He is marvellously magnetic, and never fails to win. Indeed, even I always end by making allowances for him, naughty boy!—although I *was* provoked about his last summer's entanglement, when it broke his engagement to Beatrice Van Schuler."

"His last summer's entanglement——" breathed the other woman. Her eyes were fixed widely upon the speaker.

"Yes: it was up on the Maine coast. He became infatuated with some girl up there, one of the professional class, I believe. Dovey Bristol had his yacht in the neighborhood at the time, and I am Dovey's mother-confessor, so he told me all about it except her name. Really, every one got hold of the affair, for Jack actually engaged himself to her, foolish fellow! My dear, suppose we take a cup of tea now? Oh, yes, do! It will nerve us for the last hour, when the rush comes. Listen; Bertie Armat is singing, but the hangings are so heavy we can talk and not disturb him. Here is the sugar: will you have lemon?"

"Thank you," murmured the other.

"It was perfectly ridiculous in Jack, although they say she was a superb-looking creature. Dovey gave me quite a thrilling description of her: very classic and tall and divinely unsophisticated and ideal and that sort of thing, you know; so they say; but she knew well enough what she was about. The angelic are the kind who figure in law-courts and love dramatic situations. It is said, at least Dovey says, that he knows Jack has not yet had the courage to break that engagement; so she must have rather a strong hold on him to cause

him to risk Beatrice Van Schuler for a girl whom he couldn't possibly marry. It was really not like Jack at all!"

The younger woman opened her lips as if to speak, but bent her head and slowly sipped the tea. Then she said,—

"You say he was engaged to her. Why couldn't he marry her—the other woman?" but her voice was so low she had to repeat the question.

"Oh, my dear, quite impossible every way. She was just—anybody, you know! Besides, he was engaged at the time, although that would be a small consideration to Jack, naughty fellow; and in the second place, he *must* marry money. He's awfully involved already. They say that is the reason the wedding has been hurried up. The Van Schulers are enormously wealthy, you know. Oh, yes, it was announced soon after his return in the fall. The wedding comes off next month; they sail afterwards; a great many people I know are going over in the same steamer. It would be awfully dramatic if the other woman should suddenly appear and make a scene, wouldn't it? You know, there's no relying on persons of that sort: they sacrifice everything to emotion or for notoriety. I do hope the dreadful creature will not sue or do anything shocking, for Jack's sake, poor fellow!"

"I hope not," said the other, mechanically. Her eyes were downcast; her hands lay in her lap with the fingers interlocked. Suddenly they moved, and the little thread of gold slipped down, and with a quick motion was swept off and went rolling over the shining floor, circling and stopping almost at the feet of a woman who had just entered, where it lay an imperceptible thing except to one pair of eyes watching it.

"My dear, didn't you drop something?" asked the older woman, looking from one side of her chair to the other.

"Nothing of value." The answer was in a colorless voice. "It is utterly worthless."

"Oh, Jack Sherrard will be here presently, for there is Beatrice Van Schuler now. She has just come, and is talking with Mrs. Harwood. Perfectly gowned, isn't she? Hard, cold face, though; don't you think so? Oh, she'll hold on to him now she's got him. She has the old Van Schuler closeness. Why, my dear, her own grandfather——"

The other woman suddenly arose straight and tall against the palms, where she had stood awhile before, but with a difference. Her white lines shone out from the sharply-broken green, and the candlelight intensified the purity of her beautiful brow and throat. Her face was very pale, and there seemed a change in the gray eyes fixed intensely upon the woman who stood speaking to the hostess: something had gone out of them.

"Would it really matter if I did not stay for the last hour?" she said, turning suddenly. "I have a long way to go, and am so very tired this evening."

"What! My dear, what do you mean? You cannot go! Why, Mrs. Harwood has told every one about your unique style; you are quite a feature, you know. This time to-morrow they will be raving

about you! Never mind the crowd; it's only a little nervousness and perfectly natural, perfectly. Here, take some tea; you are shockingly pale, but it will soon pass off. Nonsense! Why, the men are just beginning to come. There is Willie Doubledock; he's worth ten millions! He's coming this way, too." She turned to greet effusively an approaching group, but the other moved to a door near by.

She drew aside its red hangings, and, holding them just an instant in her bare hand, looked back, her face turned to where one woman stood near the hostess.

It may have been an instant of irresolution or one of irrevocable resolve. Had the psychologist been near, he might have solved it. Had the painter been near, he would have trampled his tender grain, have washed in a lurid sky, and straightway have reversed Scripture by slaying that Wonder called Youth with one dart of a javelin flung from the hand of a Philistine.

Her eyes sought the place where lay the thread of gold, but it was covered by voluminous draperies.

A moment later the little body presiding over the tea-table turned in a delighted flutter to present some new-comers, among whom was the heiress, Miss Van Schuler; but the curtain had fallen behind the Other Woman.

Virginia Woodward Cloud.

AS THE LIGHT TO THE EYE.

I KNOW not whether
 The eye loves the light,
 But I know that without it
 As naught were its sight.
 I know not whether
 The brook loves the rain,
 But I know that without it
 Its babbling were vain.
 As the light to the eye,
 To the blossom the dew,
 And the rain to the brook,
 To my heart-life are you.
 And should destiny say it,
 That I must forget,
 I might bow and obey it
 Submissive—and yet,
 As the eye ever closed,
 And the brook without rain,
 And the ear in the silence,
 So my heart-life were vain.

Nannie Fitzhugh Maclean.

HOW TO CULTIVATE THE BODY.

THE ancient Greeks gave the important subject of physical culture very careful attention, and were rigid in exacting for their youth a gymnastic training. Even the girls of Sparta were expected to be good gymnasts, and no young woman could marry unless she was proficient in various exercises. Consequently the bodies of both sexes were healthy and beautifully developed. Their minds were also highly developed, but not at the expense of the body, as is generally the case nowadays. Grecian philosophers and physicians believed that the mind could not possibly be in a healthy state unless the body was in perfect health, and acted accordingly. It would be well if with us it was compulsory for parents to give their offspring a course of physical training.

General physical exercise is the kind required for boys and girls, and it is essential that judicious systematic training be pursued. This can be had only at public or private schools where physical culture is obligatory, or at well-conducted gymnasiums, where there is a system for training the body in a rational way. Many people think that a gymnasium is a place for sporting-men. This is a mistake. Clergymen, doctors, students, clerks, governesses, and society people frequent respectable gymnasiums. The gymnasium of to-day is a very different place from that of fifty years ago. Formerly the aim of the gymnast was to turn out men who could lift heavy weights and court death on the flying trapeze. Nowadays all this is changed: physical training is carried out in a scientific manner; men of ability have made physical culture a profession, and their object is to make pupils healthy, strong, and graceful. Most modern gymnasiums have appliances for the cultivation of every part of the body, and able instructors and physicians in attendance.

I advise all young and middle-aged men and women to spend an hour daily in earnest systematic physical exercise. The best plan is to enter a gymnasium where some system is employed. There are several systems of physical training,—the Swedish, the German, the English, and the so-called American. The Swedish and the German are considered by competent judges to be the best. The teachers of the German system claim that it is the best because it aims at general physical culture, and that it keeps the mind as well as the body in a wholesome activity. This system was founded by Jahn in 1810. It embraces three departments,—school gymnastics, popular gymnastics, and military gymnastics. The founder's aim was to make the youth of Prussia strong and courageous to defend their country when needed, and from his idea the present German system of gymnastics has grown.

The Swedish system was devised by Ling at the commencement of this century, and has been improved by his followers, who assert that it aims at an harmonious relation of body to mind, and that it is the best for the development of the fundamental functions. It is a system of voluntary movements arranged and executed with care. The movements comprise leg movements, which increase circulation and regulate the action of the heart; back and chest movements, which strengthen

and expand the lower part of the chest; heave movements, which strengthen the arms and the upper part of the chest; shoulder movements, to pull the shoulders back; respiratory movements, balance movements, abdominal exercises, etc.

The English system of free athletic exercises has been tried with great success in France. No doubt it has a wonderful influence on the moral and social qualities of the young.

The so-called American system is a mixture of the German and Swedish systems. Our teachers of physical culture take the best ideas from all systems, and find that the combination works well.

I do not advocate any particular system. My aim is to suggest practical means whereby the body can be cultivated. The Swedish, German, English, and American systems are all good, and either, judiciously followed, will bring about the desired result.

Gymnastics should be directed towards promoting the healthy activity of the organs that make blood, to correcting defects, and to the perfection of the human figure. The most helpful movements are also the most beautiful. The Greeks cultivated the body as no other nation has done, with this result. In training, one should begin slowly and build up the weak parts first; then exercise should be taken so as to bring nearly all the muscles into action at the same time. This stimulates the action of the heart and lungs, besides increasing the circulation and respiration. Many muscles of the body, from lack of use, waste away. The technical term for this wasting is atrophy, and to avoid it every muscle in the body should be exercised regularly. Light, quick exercise is the best. Heavy dumb-bells or pulley-weights should not be used. One hour's vigorous exercise daily is all that is needed, and should always be followed by a tepid bath. Avoid everything that throws extra strain upon the heart, and aim at the correction of errors of nutrition.

All who can possibly enter a gymnasium should do so, for public gymnasiums are now so conducted that by following the directions of the instructors it is almost impossible to exercise in such a way as will be detrimental to health; but those who are unable or unwilling to do this can by simple means build up and improve the body at home. For strengthening and developing the legs nothing can be better than walking. A simple but most useful exercise, which all can practise, is that of breathing. When the breathing capacity is increased, the general health is improved. For the breathing exercise, throw the head up, the shoulders back, and the chest out; inflate the lungs through the nose until full; then exhale quickly until the lungs are empty, and finish with long-drawn inspirations. This should be done, if possible, out of doors. For strengthening and developing the upper part of the body a pair of light dumb-bells is all that is needed.

Physical exercise should be taken regularly and continued through life. It is a remedy against many of the diseases prevalent at the present time. I urge all who desire strength, health, and beauty to take plenty of out-door exercise in addition to the home or gymnasium exercises. Out-door exercises help to the development of the respiratory organs.

Wilton Tournier.

A DREAM IN THE MORNING.

AND the One to whom are intrusted the newly-born into heaven turned to the soul, faint still with earthly tremors and yet wedded to mortal joys, and said,—

"Thou hast loved much!"

"Yes," she answered, "and one most of all. Time is empty till he come to me, and yet the years shall be as days if he come at last."

Then a shadow, as of human pity, fell upon the face of the One, and he answered, "His place is not thine, except he win it by ways full of peril that may not be described."

The soul cried out sharply, and looked upon him as though he were an enemy, even though she stood within the walls of that which the earth-born call heaven.

"His place shall be mine," she cried, "if mine may not be his. I will go down to hell, if he be there."

"Nay," said the One, compassionately, "these be childish words, left of the old earth,—babble of place and lot. But choose now. Wilt thou rebel against the Mighty, or wilt thou submit to what hath been decreed from of old?"

The soul stood white and thin as if, in that moment, she endured a second death.

"There is no way," she asked, "by which I can give up my place to him while I descend and pray for him in his?"

"No way."

"Then must I submit." The soul paled and withered like one in whom the second death had already been accomplished, though the fires of hell were alight in her anguished eyes. She turned her about, and then looked back upon the One, and said, "Is there not some little instant marked out from all time when we may meet,—an instant only?"

"The instant is thine," said the One, in sweet kindliness, "and this is how thou shalt find it. Straight before thee, as thou standest, lies a silver track, and that shalt thou follow till thou hast reached the end which overhangs the void below; and there at the end shalt thou cling, with blackness above thee and blackness beneath. For that way shall he come, after many years, hurled by the winds upon his darkening way, and for as long as thou canst cling to him he is thine."

Then the eyes of the soul became sweetly alive once more, for hope had fed and nourished them.

"And if I cling altogether," she faltered, "and if I draw him back upon the way?"

"Nay," said the One, sorrowfully, "if thou canst, the gift is thine; but no one hath yet done so fearsome and so great a deed."

The soul paused for no further question, lest she might be altogether denied, but she hastened swiftly upon the appointed way, as one who sees joy at the end of her journey. And when she had found the

silver track, she sped fast upon it, heeding not her loneliness nor the strange fears that would assail her. And as she went, the way narrowed until it lay before her as a line of light, and she could scarce find room upon it for her slender feet. The void above her was black, and the void below lay as a pit where midnight reigned without a star. Yet still her heart prayed ceaselessly to the Love which is for all that the love which was for one might not lose that which had given it life. And when the way became so narrow that none without wings might traverse it, she lay down, clasping it with both arms, and so crawled outward until she had reached the point overhanging the void.

Now, how long the soul lay clinging there none may know but the Infinite Love with whom all other loves are one, but it is written that many years went by on earth before yet that other soul, so loved and so desired, was done with mortal life. But there came a moment when, like a rustling leaf upon a wailing wind, it came fleeting down the void where lay its mate with stiffening arms but ever-living eyes. And she cried aloud with gladness, "Oh, thou hast come! thou art mine again!" and with one hand she drew him to her face, so that they clung and kissed as of old, though over the blackness of the void.

"Now thou shalt do as I bid thee," she broke forth, in great sobs, "or else are we undone. Hold thou fast to my hand, and cling to this line of light. Look not behind thee, though my hand be unloosed, but cling with all thy strength; and when thou hast gained a foothold, walk—nay, run—till thou hast reached the fair country beyond, and, though thou hear me not, look not behind thee."

So, still clinging with one hand, and holding her love with the other, she dropped her frail figure from its resting-place, and it hung perilously over the nothingness below. And, not knowing what he did, her love climbed fearfully to her place, and made his way along the narrow track, still holding her hand, so that she was dragged painfully for many paces. And there came a moment when she cried,—

"Loose me now, and let me go, and look not back for me!"

She drew her hand from his, and threw up her other arm in silent signal of farewell,—though he might not see it,—and gave herself up to darkness and the pit; but lo! the void would not receive her, and the air was as earth to her joyful feet. And, treading thereon, she overtook her love, as he made his slow way upon the narrow road, and walked beside him, with cheering words, though only the blackness was under her. And when he comprehended what she had endured for his sake, it was as if he had been new-born, through much travail and anguish, to a knowledge of that which is high, and a scorn of the false joys which had once beguiled him.

The pathway grew wide enough for two, and she trod upon it with him, and hand in hand they went smiling into the pleasant country beyond.

And there the One appointed to cherish the souls newly come into heaven met them with arms outstretched.

"Thou hast loved much," he said to her who had found her joy. "Yea, thou hast loved much!"

Alice Brown.

LITERARY POPULARITY.

WHEN an author who has done good things in literature declares himself glad that he is unpopular, it may nearly always be taken for granted that he regrets his unpopularity very much indeed. The late Dante Gabriel Rossetti is said to have despised this element of success, and yet one need only scan with unbiassed feelings the most meritorious of his poems to perceive the dilettante eccentricity which tinges them all, good, bad, and indifferent. With George Eliot it was quite otherwise. She can be quoted in her journal as declaring, just before the publication of "Adam Bede," that if the public did not choose to accept her with a certain distinct acclaim, she preferred never to seek its favor henceforth.

That word "public" is both a large and a peculiar one. It has diverse definitions. To the mere sensationalist it has one; to the careful artist it has another; to the ambitious reacher after broadly telling results it has still another; to the persistent delver it has yet one more; and so on, through a range of variant creative traits, equipments, and purposes. But contempt for popularity, when it exists as an author's actual quality and not as his mere dainty affectation, is at best the blossom of a morbid growth. It all comes to this, I imagine: every author would like to have his public, but the most fastidious would desire to select his own. "With all my faults," a young novelist of much force not long ago said to me, "I at least have never deserved to be called popular." This was a pungent epigram as it passed his lips, and yet to see behind its picturesque cynicism needed no great keenness of vision. "If I had my own way," a celebrated poet once affirmed to me, "I would never publish my verses at all, but only print them at my private expense, and send them to those persons for whose verdicts, favoring or adverse, I really cared." This dictum, as it seems to me, only meant that the poet would like recognition from a public of his own choosing, but it quite evaded the question of whether he would prefer to print his books with or without any public at all.

Say what they please, all authors desire a public. But there is every reason to realize and sympathize with the distastes and prejudices of authors who resent and condemn the languid or ignorant cult of the masses. I recall, in earlier days, having talked on this subject with the genial and immensely popular poet, Longfellow. During an intimate conversation I had quoted to him one of his own most beautiful sonnets (that, inscribed to Dante, which begins "I enter, see thee in the glooms"), and after my halting and rather effete recitation had ended, he surprised me by saying, in words which I cannot repeat correctly, but of which I surely give the substance, "People come to me from all quarters, to admire my Coleridge inkstand, to gaze on myself, my library, my surroundings, but I rarely get the pleasure of meeting those who have, like yourself, any of my poems by heart." Surely no poet had more reason to despise popularity than had Longfellow, if it be true that being familiar with anything breeds contempt for it. And yet the simple admission just recorded of him served to show, I think, that while vulgar curiosity wearied his amiable nature, true appreciation brought it balm and cheer.

The "ill nature" of Tennyson had become notorious long before his death. Interviewers and autograph-hunters found him callous to their entreaties for years. His repelling attitude had grown almost a proverb for at least two

decades before he died. But behind all his harsh disdain of just the silly hero-worship which Longfellow so gently tolerated, lay an undoubted regard for honest and intelligent esteem. He made himself cordially approachable to many Englishmen of culture while he was yet in his prime, and to not a few Americans, of whom our own Bayard Taylor was one. Taylor spoke to me in loving terms of Tennyson, and, unless I mistake, told me that he was the Laureate's guest for several days at Farringford. And yet Bayard Taylor was by no means an adorer of Tennyson's work. An old number of the *North American Review* (say about the year 1868) will disclose a criticism, many pages long, in which Taylor distinctly states him to be a poet of the second class. I cannot remember Taylor's exact words in summing up the talents of Tennyson, which he allowed to be exceptional, even extraordinary; but, unless I am very wrong, his final verdict ran something like this: "He has the power to soar, and to remain aloft, but he cannot stay in air, like the Theban eagle, with motionless wings."

This kind of comment must in those days have been balm to Tennyson. A good deal of his alleged superciliousness was possibly brought about by the tremendous hostility which assailed him on every side, from the year 1850 (let us say) until certainly 1875—and perhaps a good deal later. Whatever may be asserted now, he was for a long time the very jeer of the English critics. *Punch* mercilessly parodied his "Maud," now admitted to be a masterpiece. Bulwer's assault upon him is too well known even to mention. One need only to search the back numbers of English reviews in order to assure one's self of the scorching invective which this great and overshadowing poet was for years compelled to endure. His appointment to the laureateship made him conspicuous, and his intense originality whetted the envious knives of detractors. It amused me to learn that Mr. Alfred Austin was one of his would-be successors, and to observe this gentleman as a mourner for him in elegiac verse. About twenty years ago Mr. Austin wrote against Tennyson with magnificent scorn, in a series of papers called "The Poetry of the Period" and published in *Temple Bar*. He placed Shelley, Byron, Keats, and Wordsworth far above the singer of "Elaine," "Godiva," and "Ænone," sneered at his "trim, idyllic" manner, and regretted his failure to reach the higher bourns of poetic inspiration. A good many people, twenty years ago, seemed to acquiesce in Mr. Austin's judgments. Now it is quite different, and we hear the noble creator of "The Princess" and "In Memoriam" ranked with Virgil, Homer, and Dante.

Beyond a doubt all this tide of fierce abuse, gradually changing to encomium and even rapturous reverence, had its world-wearying effect upon Tennyson. He saw through the whole falsity and humbug of "criticism," and withdrew himself into the silence and solemnity of a grand reserve. For nearly thirty years before his death one might read from his attitude that he despised public opinion and simply permitted the tides of it to ebb and flow as they pleased. With Longfellow, his radiant though lesser American contemporary, it was different. Longfellow, for a number of years before his death, "sold," in a practical sense, far below Tennyson, and yet the poet of Cambridge preserved his gracious receptivity and hospitality till the last. There was a time when Longfellow's income from his poetry amounted to as much as fourteen thousand dollars a year. If he had been able to reap his deserved profits from the English sale of his books, it would have amounted to at least thrice that sum. But "Hiawatha" and "Evangeline" were not followed up by verses equally popular. One of his volumes, "Two Books of Song," was a disastrous financial failure;

and although cheerful, happy-hearted, and undepressed till the hour of his death, it is a fact that Longfellow saw his popularity wane to a degree scarcely dreamed of by those who now love and cherish his brilliant memory.

Delectable indeed is popularity to an author, but popularity is not all. It sometimes can be found to an amazing extent in the case of novelists whose work bears upon its face the very sign-manual of future oblivion. Indeed, there is large evidence that few of the greatest writers have ever been popular, and even when the opposite has been true the wide circulations of their books have nearly always depended upon causes which did not concern their real greatness. I have always thought that thousands of Macaulay's admirers quite failed to value him at his best and were more dazzled by his marvellous facility than by his vast intellectual splendor. A famous author, living in England, not long ago said to me, half humorously, "Do you know, I have never in my life had but one success?" He told me the name of the book which had brought him this material and distinctive result, and I was hardly surprised to learn that it did not by any means rank among his best.

Authors are always foolish in striving to *secure* popularity. It is like the wind, and bloweth where it listeth. Every new year makes the celebrity of Walter Savage Landor firmer. And yet he has not only never been popular, but I question if his publishers could truthfully state that it has ever paid them to issue his wonderful writings. Again, Mr. Herbert Spencer will probably die a poor man; and yet to doubt the worth of his work is like doubting the warmth of the sun. Emerson, a writer of unparalleled beauty and force (however one may care or not care for his tenets and theories), reaped nothing that resembled a fortune. Hawthorne was no gatherer of gold, notwithstanding the very marked renown which came to him a good while before his death.

If writers like these had striven for popularity, they might have achieved merely extinction. They were doubtless neither anxious for it nor disdainful of it, and no other course is the sensible and philosophic one. The great secret of contentment on the part of a writer is to assure himself that he has got out of his pen the best work it can perform. This, I grant, is not always an easy accomplishment, for many bewildering mundane cares too often thrust themselves between the aspirant and his ideal. But the only happy artist, nevertheless, is he whose artistic conscience remains a clean one. He may drape his walls with the textures of Oriental looms, and hang them with Meissoniers and Daubignys; but if the gains that permit these luxuries have not been acquired by a patient loyalty to his own finest capacity of effort, no amount of personal comfort and sleekness will satisfy him. A garret and a crust might prove tenfold more physically distressing, but there are circumstances in which they would be fraught with a rarer if less tangible joy. Popularity is delightful to an author only when it comes as the gracious consequence of serious and high-minded toil. Its refusal to follow literary struggle can never deal so deep a pang as when it has been desired more than excellence. If I might presume to advise co-workers on this point, I should tell them that the less they concern themselves with popularity the stronger is their chance of attaining it. To seek it presupposes, inevitably, an inferior kind of ambition. To have it cross one's threshold unsolicited is always a welcome accident. To entertain it after such arrival with meats and wine is to lower one's dignity. Give it the freedom of your chambers, but let it go or stay as it wills. Be courteous to it, but never flatteringly so. Always remember that it has many smiles, but few

mercies, and be mindful, too, of its immeasurable caprice. Once show it that you can be happy without either its cajoleries or its frowns, and the chances are that it may willingly house with you as your wageless bondsman.

Edgar Fawcett.

MEN OF THE DAY.

PROFESSOR HUXLEY, the great scientist, is a keen-eyed, sharp-featured man, with curly whitish side-whiskers, but is clean-shaven as to lip and chin, and is rising nine-and-sixty. He is quite crotchety, almost cranky, in his ways, and is renowned for his irascible temper, being almost always engaged in a fierce war of words with somebody. When he smites an opponent he falls upon him with all his might and literally whirls him away. He is naturally weighed down with different degrees, and he recently received the somewhat dubious honor of being made a Privy Councillor. He lives in Sussex, in a house specially designed for him by his son-in-law. He calls it "Hodeslea," which is the ancient form of his surname. A rather good story is told of the way in which a local guide used to make the Professor show himself at his library window to visitors from all parts of the country. He would take a group of tourists to a wall close to the great man's house, and say to them, "Now watch your chance: here he comes," at the same time throwing a handful of gravel against the window, whereat the Professor would appear foaming with rage and shaking his fists at the innocent visitors, who would retire much perplexed and sometimes spread the report that the Professor was demented. He is perhaps best known as the popularizer of the Darwinian theory of evolution. He is also a devout believer in the existence of the sea-serpent, and declares that those who laugh at the idea of a monster serpent existing in the deep, and big enough to drag down whole ships and their crews, are both foolish and ignorant. Indeed, he holds this opinion of all those who do not agree with him. He is the *bête noire* of the autograph-hunter, whose excuse for existence he does not see. Yet he relates with much gusto how his postman not long since asked him for an autograph, confessing frankly that he did not know what the Professor's business was, but explaining that he "had heard folks say as how he was something s'perior."

Luigi Arditi, the great conductor, is a short-set, broad-faced, gestureful man, of enthusiastic manner, with a shining bald head and a sparse black moustache, and looks younger than his years, which are two-and-seventy. He has been wielding the baton for quite four decades, and has probably conducted more Italian operas than any other living man, besides perpetrating an opera of his own, entitled "La Spia," which won him the Order of the Medjidie from the Sultan of Turkey. His famous waltz "Il Bacio" has perhaps set more couples whirling than even Strauss's "Blue Danube." Many good stories are told at his expense. Not long since, in company with Madame Valleria, the prima donna, and a select coaching-party, he was driven to Stratford-on-Avon, but he utterly failed to display the necessary amount of enthusiasm in regard to the Shakespeare monument. "Shakespeare? Oh, yes, Shakespeare," he murmured, wearily, and one of the party volunteered the hint, "You recollect, maestro, 'Amletto' and 'Romeo e Giuletta.'" Then he began to be interested. "Ah, yes," he replied; "I quite understand. Ze librettist." Yet withal Patti thinks more of him than of any living man except Nicolini.

M. Crofton.

Books of the Month.

At Long and Short Range. By William Armstrong Collins.

The reviewer can well fancy the cheerful author of *At Long and Short Range* seated beside his study-table with a half-circle of readers over-against him, chatting in his genial way upon every topic dear to mankind. Nothing is too trifling, nothing too portentous, for him to descant upon, and everything he touches takes on a sudden new light or a depth of meaning unforeseen. He can be sprightly, jolly, grave, serious, or pathetic with equal charm, and his amiable character shines through his well-ordered words like the sun through the pleasant foliage.

The range of subjects in *At Long and Short Range* is as infinite as that of the daily converse of the wide world. Some thoughts are expressed as briefly as apothegms, some stretch out into rippling essaylets, and some stop midway between these points, in paragraphs so diverting that one would willingly have them run on into a chapter. The fashions in pipes; the woman who can take a joke; the "first pair of spectacles which marks more than a mile-stone;" the query "What becomes of the gold-headed canes?" scraps about reading and books that have arrested the writer's attention; ruminations on religious, social, or economical questions,—all these subjects and a myriad more have passed through Mr. Collins's mind and come forth in table-talk which is as good as the best conversation it is ever one's fortune to hear.

The beauty of *At Long and Short Range*, in typography, paper, shape, and binding, is quite unusual even in a day of exquisite books. It is an ideal side-pocket volume both in the character of its contents and the handiness of its size, and its publishers, the Messrs. Lippincott, are to be commended for providing an object of art so much in keeping with the holiday season.

Text-Book of Normal Histology. By George A. Piersol, M.D.

With an equipment furnished by many years of teaching and practice, Dr. George A. Piersol, Professor of Anatomy in the University of Pennsylvania, has undertaken and carried to notable fulfilment the task of making a standard text-book of Normal Histology, including an account of the development of the tissues and of the organs. Such a work, so planned, and informed with the ripe learning of a recognized specialist in this branch of the profession of medicine, will be valued by every practitioner and every student; and that Dr. Piersol has, with a discrimination born of wide experience, omitted the wearying minutæ and brought forth in bold relief the salient features of the subject, will be an added incentive, to those who can ill spare time for exhaustive reading, to procure this excellent volume. Says the author, "Many years of teaching have convincingly shown that too great conciseness of statement on the one hand, and too great elaboration of detail on the other, are alike unsatisfactory" in the effort to gain an adequate knowledge of minute anatomy; and in this connection he states with great emphasis "that the recognition of the underlying morphological relations of the tissues alone can bring the appreciation of the broad principles requisite for the elevation of histology from

a maze of barren details to a study full of interest and suggestion." He therefore adds a brief account of the embryological processes and the histological differentiation concerned in the development of the tissues and organs of adult structures.

The illustrations, prepared with especial care by the author, are abundant and of unusual excellence, and, with contents fully in touch with the latest discoveries in that part of medicine treating of the tissues and organs, this *Text-Book of Normal Histology* reflects great credit on its learned projector. The Messrs. Lippincott, its publishers, have given it the substantial form desirable for a book of constant reference.

Tales from Hans Andersen.

The present generation of young ladies and young gentlemen of tender years is so much engrossed with the reforms of the school-room and the discipline of parents that it is feared it does not take enough unstudied fun in the fairy-books of other days. Any boy or girl who ignores Hans Christian Andersen has a doubtful future before him or her, for it is a test of sweet temper and manly and womanly traits to love these perennial tales when one is under one's teens; and not to like fairy-lore is a very bad omen indeed. It is, therefore, a cheering sign that the J. B. Lippincott Company has found a call for a new edition of *Tales from Hans Andersen*, and we welcome this handsomely illustrated folio of brown and gold with the cordiality due to an old friend.

The Poems of Oliver Goldsmith. Edited by Austin Dobson.

In company with Messrs. J. M. Dent & Co., of London, the J. B. Lippincott Company issues *The Poems of Oliver Goldsmith*, edited by Austin Dobson, a past-master of eighteenth-century learning. Nothing could be more acceptable to the stroller who loves to put a book in his pocket, or the railway-rider who has no room in his valise for superabundant volumes, than this handy little publication. It is attractive in looks, both outside and in, and abounds in timely notes and in dainty etchings of the haunts of Noll Goldsmith.

My Child and I. A Woman's Story. By Florence Warden.

Little Perdita Farbraer is a child of the century if ever there was one, and her career from the days when she lived in her father's fine country house, Ardemes Court, and was the pet of Lord Wallinghurst, to the more mature years when as Mrs. Perdita Keen she leads the gay life of a woman of fashion, is full of the most exhilarating episodes we have recently encountered in fiction. The story contains a deal of smart writing about horse-racing and the adventures of fast young London swells, and is quite as rapid in movement as it is *fin de siècle* in tone. Mrs. Keen discovers that a young fellow who is visiting her step-daughter, Meg Keen, is really her son by a former marriage with a scapegrace son of Lord Wallinghurst, and the complications which arise from this promising situation may be realized by the reader who knows a stirring novel when he reads it.

The author of *The House on the Marsh* is always sure to produce a book with abundance of action, romance, treachery, and love fulfilled and unfulfilled, and in this latest of her works just published by the Messrs. Lippincott she has outdone herself in these respects.

The best baking powder made is, as shown by analysis, the "Royal."

Gives Edman

Com'r of Health, New-York City.



I regard the Royal Baking Powder as the best manufactured.

Marion Harland

Author of "Common Sense in the Household."

SOCIALISM AND THE AMERICAN SPIRIT.—Free institutions, the reign of the people, and the censorship assumed by the press have brought with them many salutary results. They have made life simpler, safety greater, and they have set the masses of men to thinking for themselves. But with the march of such progress there is always an accompanying excess. There will be perpetually some individuals who outdo all the rest in unattainable ideals. These eccentrics may or may not be pioneers. They may be extremists taking the wrong road; they may be advancing so far ahead of their generation that their energy is wasted and their usefulness doubtful; but, of course, it is always possible that they may prove to be the real discoverers of the truth. Yet the persistency with which such visionaries plead their cause is often a trial to their more conservative hearers. The reasonable man has been the balance-wheel of the generations past, as he is to be the saviour of the generations to come. He looks keenly down the alluring prospective of the Utopian, and he keeps well in mind the dangers of retrogression. But, with what is called obstinacy and stolidity by those holding more advanced views, he maintains an attitude of judicial balance that includes the best elements of both movements.

Such, in the barest outline, is the attitude of Mr. Nicholas Paine Gilman in his latest work, *Socialism and the American Spirit*. He calmly reviews the social situation as it stands in the United States to-day, and he arrives at conclusions which must cheer, as well as convince, every thoughtful reader. His book is a wise, careful, and elevating criticism of a difficult problem, steering between the errors of Herbert Spencer on the one hand and the visions of Mr. Howells and his cultus on the other, with a firmness of helm which is most reassuring in a time of fiscal vagaries and sentimental social theories. The argument it maintains is, "that what may be called 'the American Spirit' allows to both Socialism and Individualism their due weight, and that it has shown a path between the two extremes of paternalism and 'administrative nihilism,' which the American people, at least, may well continue to follow." Mr. Gilman recognizes it as "a spirit at once humane and practical, conservative and progressive, hospitable to ideas and acute in criticism of their working in the concrete;" and, after a careful analysis covering the more than three hundred pages of his book, he sums up his arguments in a fine prophetic strain fully justified by his careful scrutiny of conditions: "We may wisely hope and trust that shorter hours of labor will gradually prevail; that a more equal division will be made of the profits of industry; that a closer co-operation will be accomplished of the capitalist, the employer, and the workman; that sounder systems of taxation will equalize the burden and the ability of the tax-payer; that every family will come to own a house; that education will multiply its pervasive powers through every social grade; that accumulated wealth will be more and more freely used to strengthen and adorn the public life; that science, art, and invention will irresistibly combine their offices to humanize and beautify the common lot."

Closing with such a passage, after a philosophic examination which upholds the utterance, Mr. Gilman's book leaves upon the reader, whether lay or professional, an impression of lasting value. The daily alarms of the newspaper and the idle threats of the agitator may be contemplated with serenity in the light shed by this judicial exposition of our condition, our needs, and our possible future, and the thanks of every loyal American are due to Mr. Gilman for his inspiring message in a day of seeming darkness.



CHRISTMAS

Is a joyous season, but the tendency to over-indulge in rich cakes, pies, puddings, candies, etc., weakens the stomach, and brings pain and misery to many in the form of indigestion, biliousness, sick headache, and other ailments of a more or less serious character. To strengthen the stomach and increase digestion, take **Ayer's Sarsaparilla**. It is the best tonic and alterative known to pharmacy. It cures dyspepsia, debility, nervousness, and insomnia. It is also the specific for scrofula and eruptive disorders. It is the best remedy for rheumatism, and the most potent restorative after any wasting sickness. It is the kind you need, and can have no substitute.

Ayer's Sarsaparilla

Prepared by Dr. J. C. Ayer & Co., Lowell, Mass.

Cures Others, Will Cure You

AYER'S CHERRY PECTORAL

In use for fifty years, is still the most popular and successful of all pulmonary medicines. Taken in the early stages of consumption, it checks further progress of the disease, and even at a later period, it eases the distressing cough, and enables the patient to procure much needed rest. In emergencies arising from croup, pneumonia, bronchitis, sore throat, and whooping cough, it proves a veritable household blessing, affording prompt relief, followed by certain cure.

Ayer's Cherry Pectoral,

Prepared by Dr. J. C. Ayer & Co., Lowell, Mass.

Prompt to act, sure to cure

OLD-FASHIONED GREETINGS.—In Eastern lands a man, meeting his friend of a morning, observes that "God is great," a proposition which, in that old-fashioned society, no one is disposed to dispute. But among ourselves it is "It's a fine day," or "Cold this morning," that comes most readily to the lips; yet few people concern themselves with speculating why it is fine, or cold, or wet, or dry, or realize how immensely the daily interest of life is contributed to by observation of natural phenomena and acquaintance with their cause.

It was otherwise in primitive times; all over the habitable globe men used to, and in some places do still, invent elaborate theories to account for fine weather and for foul; baffled in the endeavor to do so by natural causes, they imagined rain gods, sun gods, thunder gods, frost gods, supplicated them and propitiated them with costly or bloody sacrifices. But now that science has unravelled a great part of the mystery, the majority of men are wholly indifferent to the cause of weather.

Lord Rosebery dwelt, not long ago, on the amazing cheapness of literature, and observed that one could buy the whole of "Pickwick" for fourpence. It is a vast privilege, but surely it is still more remarkable that for two shillings and sixpence one can buy Scott's "Elementary Meteorology," containing the solution of that problem of the weather which hitherto, through all the ages, has been the most perplexing and engrossing of enigmas to mankind. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, but no man knoweth whence it cometh or whither it goeth,"—a saying most true in the ears of those who heard it, but now that we can gather knowledge from a single octavo volume, enabling us to say exactly whence the wind cometh and precisely whither it bloweth, no one seems to care much about the matter.—*Nineteenth Century*.

THE HOMING PIGEON.—Year by year the interest in carrier-pigeons increases. Belgium takes the lead, but other countries are not far behind. The facility with which the bird determines its course is as yet unexplained. To attribute this knowledge of direction to instinct is merely a confession of ignorance. It is much rather sight, reflection, and sensation which guide the carrier-pigeon on its course, and rarely guide it wrong. The same faculty is possessed by all migratory birds. To form an intelligent conception of this faculty, we must assume either a special sense or a delicate sensitiveness to atmospheric currents.

The numerous experiments made by balloonists have proved that pigeons are incapable of flying at any great height. Birds thrown out at six thousand metres fell like dead, and even at the moderate height of three hundred metres pigeons liberated by the balloonist Gaston Tissandier approached the earth in a spiral course. It is evident, hence, that they are not guided wholly by sight. To bring a point three hundred miles distant within the range of vision, it would be necessary to ascend nearly twenty thousand metres. The carrier-pigeon starting on such a journey must consequently start with faith in the unseen.—*Philadelphia Press*.

"I MADE a speech at the doctors' dinner last night."

"That accounts for it."

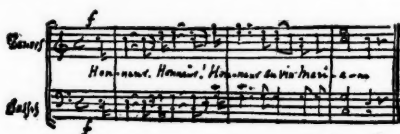
"Accounts for what?"

"Two men who were present said they had discovered a new opiate."—*Judge*.



CHARLES GOUNOD.

To my good friend, A. MARIANI, beneficent discoverer of that admirable wine which has so often restored my strength.'



Ch. Gounod

For Body and Brain.

Most popularly
used tonic-stimu-
lant in Hospitals,
Public and Relig-
ious Institutions
everywhere.

SINCE 30 YEARS ALL EMINENT PHYSICIANS RECOMMEND

VIN MARIANI

(MARIANI WINE.)

Over 7,000
written endorse-
ments from prom-
inent physicians
in Europe and
America.

NOURISHES FORTIFIES REFRESHES

*Strengthens entire system; positively the most Agreeable, Effective and Lasting
Renovator of the Vital Forces.*

SOLD EVERYWHERE.

EVERY TEST, STRICTLY ON ITS OWN MERITS, PROVES ITS EXCEPTIONAL REPUTATION.

PALATABLE AS CHOICEST OLD WINES.

SPECIAL OFFER—We will mail, gratis, a collection of 20 Portraits
and Autographs of Celebrities.

Paris: 41 Bd. Haussmann.
London: 239 Oxford Street.

MARIANI & CO., 52 West 15th Street,
New York.

GOOD CHANCE FOR A FIRST-CLASS LIAR.—I was sitting on a salt-barrel on the shady side of the dépôt while waiting for the train on the other road, when a farmer drove up in his wagon. He went around and talked with the station-agent for a few minutes, and then returned to ask,—

"Stranger, do you want to make twenty thousand dollars as easy as rolling off a log?"

"I do."

"Air you a religious man?"

"Not exactly."

"Any scruples ag'in' lyin'?"

"That's according to circumstances. State your case."

"The case is just this. I own a hundred acres of land right around here. As it stands, it's worth about eight dollars an acre. Split her up into city lots, and each lot will bring fifty dollars. You can figure on one thousand dollars an acre."

"But this is no site for a city!" I protested.

"Thar's whar the lyin' will come in. I should calkerlate on your makin' the site."

"There's no fuel, no water, no agriculture."

"Got to lie about 'em."

"You've got to have natural advantages to make a city."

"More lyin'."

"You've simply got a railroad junction, one house, and one hundred acres of mighty poor land to start on," I said, as I looked around on the lonesome prospect.

"Thar's whar the lyin' will come in," he answered. "I've known twenty towns out here to start on a heap less. Is it a bargain or no? You do the lyin' and the advertisin', and I do the sellin', and in a year we'll clear up a car-load of money. Best chance in the world for a risin' young man. Knocks a silver-mine all holler."

"I—I'm afraid I couldn't accept your liberal proposition."

"All right: no harm done. I'm lookin' fur a liar. He's got to be a good one. As you seemed to be out of a job and dead broke, I thought I'd tackle you. All the same, however, I'll hit the right man inside of a week, and he'll make his fortune here. Best of schools, plenty of churches, six railroads, rich country, future Chicago, ten factories, cultivated society, purest of water, public parks, come with a rush, sold again! If you happen to meet a liar, send him down."—*Springfield Union*.

BOLTS HAVE DRIVEN OUT THE BUTTONS.—The small metal button which turned over on to its counterpart, and which was used to fasten doors from the inside fifty years ago, is still in use in old-fashioned houses in New England. It is not to be presumed that a single one of these really good and cheap articles could be found on sale in a hardware-store in the country, the bolt having supplanted it.—*Hardware*.

"THEY say," said Spriggins, "that it takes three generations to make a gentleman."

"That," replied Wiggins, "opens up a pleasant prospect for your grandson."—*Life*.

USE POND'S EXTRACT

FOR
PILES
BURNS
SORE
EYES
WOUNDS
SORES
Headache
AND
ALL
PAIN

Have the early frosts or too late a lingering by the garden gate again aroused that **RHEUMATISM** so peacefully slumbering the summer long? Well, if it's very bad you must change your diet and perhaps take some distasteful drug—the doctor will tell you what—but first rub thoroughly the part afflicted with **POND'S EXTRACT**, then wrap it warmly with flannel, and the rheumatism may wholly disappear. It will certainly be much relieved. Now that you have the **POND'S EXTRACT** try it for any of the many things its buff wrapper mentions. It's a wonderful curative. But don't accept substitutes.
POND'S EXTRACT CO., 76 Fifth Ave., N. Y.

FOR
COLDS
CUTS
BRUISES
SPRAINS
SORE
THROAT
Catarrh
AND
AFTER
SHAVING

QUINA-LAROCHE

LAROCHE'S INVIGORATING TONIC.

GRAND NATIONAL PRIZE OF 16,600 FRANCS.

CONTAINING

Peruvian Bark, Iron
AND
Pure Catalan Wine.

An experience of 25 years in experimental analysis, together with the valuable aid extended by the Academy of Medicine in Paris, has enabled M. Laroche to extract the entire active properties of Peruvian Bark (a result not before attained), and to concentrate them in an elixir, which possessed in the highest degree its restorative and invigorating qualities, free from the disagreeable bitterness of ordinary preparations.

This invigorating tonic is powerful in its effect, is easily administered, assimilates thoroughly and quickly with the gastric juices, without deranging the action of the stomach.

Iron and Cinchona are the most powerful weapons employed in the art of curing; Iron is the principle of our blood, and forms its force and richness. Cinchona affords life to the organs and activity to their functions.



Endorsed by the Medical Faculty of Paris, and used with entire success for the cure of

MALARIA,
INDIGESTION,
FEVER and AGUE.
NEURALGIA,
LOSS of APPETITE,
POORNESS of BLOOD,
WASTING DISEASES,
and
RETARDED
CONVALESCENCE.

E. FOUGERA & CO., Agents, No. 30 North William street, New York. 22 rue Drouot, Paris.

THE FRIENDLY CATFISH.—There is a species of fish that never looks at the clothes of the man who throws in the bait, a fish that takes whatever is thrown to it, and when once it has taken hold of the hook never tries to shake a friend, but submits to the inevitable, crosses his legs, says, "Now I lay me," comes out on the bank, and seems to enjoy being taken. It is a fish that is a friend of the poor, and one that will sacrifice itself in the interest of humanity. That is the fish that the State should adopt as its trade-mark and cultivate friendly relations with and stand by. We allude to the bull-head. The bull-head never went back on a friend.

To catch the bull-head it is not necessary to tempt his appetite with a porter-house steak or to display an expensive lot of fishing-tackle. A pin-hook, a piece of liver, and a cistern-pole are all the capital required to catch a bull-head. He lies upon the bottom of a stream or pond in the mud, thinking. There is no fish that does more thinking or has a better head for grasping great questions or chunks of liver than the bull-head. The bull-head has a fine, india-rubber skin that is as far ahead of fiddle-string material for strength and durability as possible.—*American Angler.*

MR. UNION CLUB.—"I never get religious except at twilight, when I have time to sit before the fire and smoke."

Mrs. Union Club.—"I suppose the fire and smoke make you dwell upon your future, dear."

INSCRIPTION FOR COLERIDGE'S COTTAGE.

Traveller, beneath this roof in by-gone days
Dwelt Coleridge. Here he sang his witching lays
Of that strange Mariner, and what befell
In mystic hour the Lady Christabel;
And here one day, when summer breezes blew,
Came Lamb, the frolic and the wise, who drew
Fresh mirth from secret springs of inward glee:
Here Wordsworth came, and wild-eyed Dorothy.
Now all is silent; but the taper's light,
Which from these windows shone so late at night,
Has streamed afar. To these great souls was given
A double portion of the Light from Heaven.

E. H. COLERIDGE.

THEY THOUGHT OF IT.—In Illinois there is an old law on the statute-books to the effect that in criminal cases the jury is "judge of the law as well as the facts." Though not often quoted, once in a while a lawyer with a desperate case makes use of it. In this case the judge instructed the jury that it was to judge of the law as well as the facts, but added that it was not to judge of the law unless it was fully satisfied that it knew more law than the judge.

An outrageous verdict was brought in, contrary to all instructions of the court, who felt called upon to rebuke the jury. At last one old farmer arose.

"Jedge," said he, "weren't we to jedge the law as well as the facts?"

"Certainly," was the response; "but I told you not to judge the law unless you were clearly satisfied that you knew the law better than I did."

"Well, jedge," continued the farmer, as he shifted his quid, "we considered that p'int."—*Green Bag.*



THE LATEST ABOUT SUSPENDERS. — "I believe most of the people who invent new-fangled suspenders and take out patents for them are crazy," said a customer in a men's furnishing store the other day. "Can't you give me a pair of old-fashion suspenders like those you sold me ten years ago?"

"Yes," said the dealer, "I can; but these I am showing you are the latest things out."

"But, confound it, man, I do not want the latest things out," roared the customer; "all I need is a pair of ordinary, every-day suspenders, GUYOTS I think they are called, and you show me a crazy sort of thing with a lot of wheels and pulleys and weights and things. Why, it would take a man a week to learn to get into that thing, and, once in, it would take a week to get out. Every time I come here to get a pair of suspenders you try to sell me something different, and usually it is a new patent of some sort. Now, you know as well as I do that there has not been an improvement made in suspenders in fifty years that has amounted to a row of pins, and there is no suspender made which can compare with the genuine GUYOTS made in Paris by Charles Guyot. And, although you change your entire stock of suspenders every little while, you will, I am sure, own up that I am right."

"Yes, you are right," the dealer replied, "perfectly right, but we outfitters must keep up with the times. These cranks keep on bringing out new things, each new suspender more complicated and more idiotic than the one which went before. But a fancy article commands a fancy price. Yet all first-class dealers must keep the GUYOTS for thousands of customers who, like you, are not willing to make experiments, and stick to the GUYOTS, which are universally acknowledged to be the very best suspenders made for all seasons of the year."

"MY lines are not cast in pleasant places," sighed the poet, as he stood helplessly by and saw his wife throw his latest effusion into the kitchen stove.
—*Detroit Tribune*.

PRICES OF STRADIVARIUS VIOLINS.—A Stradivarius violin was sold the other day for eight hundred and sixty pounds, that being the highest price yet secured for a fiddle in the auction-room. This fact has caused some inquiry to be made into the rapid rise in the value of the violins of the great Cremona maker, whose workshop Mr. Edgar Bundy has so graphically depicted in a painting in the Royal Academy exhibition. It seems that a fine "Strad" was sold in 1805 for one hundred pounds, but by 1857, when the late James Goding's collection was brought to the hammer at Christie's, a Stradivarius violin fetched two hundred pounds, and a viola by the same maker two hundred and twelve pounds.

In 1872 a "Strad," since rechristened by its fortunate owner "The Emperor," realized two hundred and ninety pounds at the sale of the collection of Mr. Gillott, the pen-maker, and it would probably not now be parted with for four times that amount. The auction-price of a "Strad" has since reached eight hundred and sixty pounds, and it is quite possible that before the present century is over the sum will pass into four figures; while the price at the fiddle-fancier's is already a good deal higher.

It seems that the increase of cost is due partly to the demand for old violins from the United States, partly to the wish of every violinist of note to possess at least one example of the famous maker. Dr. Joachim, for instance, has three.—*London News*.

CHILDHOOD

covers the tender period of growth when the body must have materials for healthy flesh and bone development. Otherwise the child will be thin, narrow-chested and weak.

Scott's Emulsion

the Cream of Cod-liver Oil and Hypophosphites of Lime and Soda, is a palatable, easy food for growing children. It gives them healthy flesh, solid bones and glowing health *Physicians*, the world over endorse it.

WASTING DISEASES

of Children; Rickets, Skin Eruptions and Blood Troubles are speedily cured by Scott's Emulsion.

Don't be Deceived by Substitutes.

Prepared by SCOTT & BOWNE Chemists, New-York City. Druggists sell it.

THE FRIEND OF THE OVERWORKED.—An advertisement appears for the first time in this number which certainly demands more than a passing remark, and which no doubt is well known to many of our readers. We have reference to that most celebrated of tonic stimulants, "Vin Mariani," so long and favorably endorsed by the entire medical profession.

The notoriety that "Vin Mariani" has gained—and we use the word notoriety in the best sense—proves its popularity. If there is one thing more than another that strikes the attention in reference to this remarkable tonic, it is the favorable reception which it has invariably met with, and the enthusiasm it has called forth the world over from those who have availed themselves of its tonic and rejuvenescent properties.

Authors, composers, physicians, lawyers, churchmen, painters, lyric and dramatic artists, statesmen, journalists, and poets have, as if by mutual collaboration, extended appropriate words of praise to Mr. Mariani for the services rendered each individually in the beneficial results obtained from the use of his marvellous wine.

To all of our readers who feel overworked and fatigued, and who require a toning of the system and at the same time beneficial action on the vocal organs, we suggest personal testing to prove the real merits of "Vin Mariani." The New York branch of Mariani & Co., at 52 West Fifteenth Street, offer to send gratis to any person applying for the same a collection of portraits and autographs of celebrities which is highly interesting and artistic and will be appreciated by all.

MARSH-LANDS MADE VALUABLE.—Time was in this State that the marsh-lands were considered as of so little value that the more a man owned of them the poorer he was reckoned. Of late years, however, the development of the cranberry industry has modified the views on this point, and farmers are speculating on the possibility of finding other profitable uses for the marshes and meadows. High scientific authority has declared that most of the swampy and boggy lands about the State not available for cranberry-culture can be converted into soil for the cultivation of berries and vegetables in great variety.

The demand for such products is yearly growing, even faster than the population. The systematic development of these industries might have the wholesome effect to draw from the cities the hosts of people who live in the close, stuffy quarters that our civilization provides for the working-man. As in Holland, France, and Florida they have accomplished brilliant results with similar lands, there is nothing fantastic in the suggestions here made.—*Boston Transcript*.

SPLINTERS CAUSED BY LIGHTNING.—In the forest of Nemours a tree was once struck. Two pieces were rent from its trunk. The smaller was tossed to a distance of fifty feet, and the larger, which eighteen men could not move, to a distance of twenty feet or so in an opposite tack. In 1838 the top-gallant-mast of H. M. S. Rodney was hit by a flash and literally cut up into chips, the sea being strewn with the fragments as if the carpenters had been sweeping their shavings overboard. Shortly before the top-masts of H. M. S. Hyacinthe had suffered in a similar manner, and when the Thetis underwent a like visitation in Rio harbor Captain Fitzroy described the foretop-mast as "a mere collection of long splinters almost like reeds."—*Chambers's Journal*.

Recipes for December,

Mrs. Ewing,
By Mrs. Rorer,
Miss Parloa.

Cottage Pudding.—By Mrs. Emma P. Ewing, *Principal Chautauqua School of Cookery.*

Two cups of flour, one cup of milk, half cup of sugar, one egg, two teaspoons Cleveland's Baking Powder, two tablespoons melted butter. Sift the flour, baking powder and sugar together. Add the melted butter to the milk and pour over the egg, after it has been well beaten. Then stir the ingredients all together and bake in gem cups or in a square, flat pan. Serve warm with a liquid sauce.

Buckwheat Cakes. Two teacupfuls buckwheat flour, one teacupful wheat flour, three teacupfuls Cleveland's Baking Powder, one teaspoonful salt. Mix all together, and add sufficient sweet milk or water to make a soft batter. Bake on griddle at once.

Corn Bread.—By Maria Parloa. For two sheets of corn bread use a pint of wheat flour, half a pint of corn meal, one pint of milk, half a gill of sugar, one teaspoonful of salt, three teaspoonfuls of Cleveland's Baking Powder, two generous tablespoonfuls of butter and two eggs. Mix all the dry ingredients and rub through a sieve. Beat the eggs till light and add the milk to them. Stir this mixture into the dry ingredients. Add the melted butter, and beat for a few seconds. Pour into two buttered pans, and bake in a moderately hot oven for half an hour; or the batter may be baked in buttered muffin pans—this quantity yielding two dozen muffins.—(Copyright.)

Chicken Pie. Cut into pieces one chicken, boil in enough water to cover until tender, adding when half done one tablespoonful salt. Take out chicken, keep warm, and thicken the liquid with one tablespoonful each flour and butter rubbed together. Add salt and pepper to taste. Boil five minutes. Take one quart flour, two teaspoonfuls Cleveland's Baking Powder, a little salt and one

small cup butter. Mix as biscuit. Take half, roll $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick, and line a deep dish, leaving an inch over the sides to turn up over top crust. Put in chicken, pour over gravy, cover with the other crust, with a large hole in centre for steam to escape. Wet the edge and fold over the under crust, press firmly together. Spread soft butter over the top, make ornament to fit the centre, and bake until done.

Cracknels.—By Mrs. S. T. Rorer, *Prin. Philadelphia Cooking School.*

Add to one quart of sifted flour a half teaspoonful of grated nutmeg, one teaspoonful of cinnamon, one of Cleveland's Baking Powder, a half of salt; mix and rub in four ounces of butter. Add sufficient milk to make a dough. Knead and roll out, spread lightly with soft butter, fold in three, roll out again, and cut with a sharp knife into square cakes. Beat the white of one egg, a tablespoonful of sugar and 1 of milk together, brush over the tops and bake 15 minutes in a moderately quick oven.

Every ingredient
used in making

Cleveland's Baking Powder

is named
on the label.

The composition of most baking powders is concealed, for the very plain reason that some ingredient is used that the makers do not wish you to know about.

You know what you are eating when you use Cleveland's.

Cleveland's baking powder, "pure and sure."

A $\frac{1}{4}$ pound can mailed free on receipt of 15c. in stamps.
Cleveland Baking Powder Co., 81 Fulton St., New York.

Our Cook Book Contains

400 Recipes,

Free.

Send stamp and address

Cleveland Baking Powder Co.,
81 Fulton St., New York.

A PROPER DISINFECTANT FOR HOUSEHOLD USE.—It is, at least, always wise to be on the safe side, if that side can be gained, and in no instance is this of more concern than the health of the family.

Proper disinfectants, properly used at frequent periods, certainly do tend to prevent many diseases, and the expense attending their frequent use is so trivial that it would seem as if in every well-managed household their use would be second to nothing but soap.

Chemical science has proven that the best disinfectants and germ-destroyers are entirely odorless, and the popular preparation known as Platt's Chlorides is the best exponent of this class. This solution has for many years commanded the praise of thousands of physicians and of hundreds of thousands of careful housekeepers, and its cheapness and freedom from every objectionable feature commend its use to every one.

A FOOL KINGFISHER.—One day, as I was walking across the river-bridge with two friends and happened to look down in the water (which, by the way, is about forty feet distant from the bridge), I saw a pickerel about three feet long lying there in the clear water near the shore. I told my friends to stay there and I would get my rod and line and a live minnow and catch the fish. I did so, and put a nice little shiner on the hook. I had an automatic reel with ninety feet of line on it. I let the minnow down in the water, and it hardly reached there before a kingfisher came down from under the bridge, seized my minnow, and started down the river. When he got the line straightened out, he let the minnow drop, and I supposed he went on down the river, so I started once more to catch the pickerel, but had hardly got my line in shape again when down came Mr. Kingfisher and took the minnow again.

This time, however, he went back under the bridge, and after a moment or two let the minnow fall back in the river, and I then went after the pickerel again, and for the third time down came Mr. Kingfisher, but he got the hook along with the minnow, and I had him fast. He flew right straight up in the air, and I let him have the whole ninety feet of line. Then I reeled him in from the sky, and you never heard such a noise as he made, but I landed him all right. I then took him and showed him to all the fishermen in town, and then let him go, and he went back to the bridge.—*American Angler.*

THE SECTARY.

A heavy hand the bruised reed to break,
A foot to quench the smoking flax well shod,
A bitter zeal, alert and keen to make
The breach more wide betwixt mankind and God,

A visage stern that bids all stand apart
Who dare to worship at a different shrine,
A sullen mood, a cold and sluggish heart,
Unwarmed by any pulse of love divine,

A tongue in chiding swift, in praising slow,
A practised eye his fellows' faults to scan,—
These are the attributes by which men know
The Sectary, unloved by God or man.

Spectator.

World's Fair,
CHICAGO.
Mellin's Food
RECEIVES THE
Highest Award
FOR INFANTS' FOODS.
Medal and Diploma.

[copy.] CHICAGO, Oct 14th, 1893.

Mellin's Food is used in the Children's Building at the World's Fair for feeding infants that are left at the Crèche. No other infants' food is used. After a fair trial of the other foods I find Mellin's Food gives the best satisfaction. I confidently recommend it to all mothers.

(Miss) MARJORY HALL,

Matron of the Crèche and Day Nursery Exhibit, World's Fair,
and Virginia Day Nursery, New York City.

THE BOTTOM OF THE ATLANTIC OCEAN.—Proceeding westward from the Irish coast the ocean-bed deepens very gradually: in fact, for the first two hundred and thirty miles the gradient is but six feet to the mile. In the next twenty miles, however, the fall is over nine thousand feet, and so precipitous is the sudden descent that in many places depths of twelve hundred to sixteen hundred fathoms are encountered in very close proximity to the one-hundred-fathom line. With the depth of eighteen hundred to two thousand fathoms, the sea-bed in this part of the Atlantic becomes a slightly undulating plain, whose gradients are so light that they show but little alteration of depth for twelve hundred miles. The extraordinary flatness of these submarine prairies renders the familiar simile of the basin rather inappropriate.

The hollow of the Atlantic is not strictly a basin whose depth increases regularly towards the centre. It is rather a saucer- or dish-like one, so even is the contour of its bed. The greatest depth in the Atlantic has been found some hundred miles to the northward of the island of St. Thomas, where soundings of three thousand eight hundred and seventy-five fathoms were obtained. The seas round Great Britain can hardly be regarded as forming part of the Atlantic hollow. They are rather a part of the platform banks of the European continent which the ocean has overflowed.—*Nautical Magazine*.

"You have no ancestry," said Mr. Blueblud to Chollie Noo, who wished to marry Miss Blueblud. "You are a man of no family."

"That's why I wish to marry," said Chollie. "I wish to start a family."
—*Puck*.

TOBACCO.—I cannot help feeling a sneaking kindness for Charles Lamb, who toiled after tobacco "as some men toil after virtue." "I design," he said, "to give up smoking, but I have not yet fixed on the equivalent vice." In his letter to Wordsworth accompanying his "Farewell Ode to Tobacco," he says, "Tobacco has been my evening comfort and my morning curse for these five years. . . . I have had it in my head to do it these two years, but tobacco stood in its own light when it gave me headaches that prevented my singing its praises." So general, however, has the custom become, in spite of every counterblast, that, with Thackeray, we need not yet despair of seeing "a bishop lolling out of the Athenæum with a cheroot in his mouth, or, at any rate, a pipe stuck in his shovel hat."—*National Review*.

TOO MUCH FOR HIM.—The tramp had struck the citizen for a small loan, and the citizen was sizing him up as an experiment.

"I've got a job for you," he said, persuasively.

"What to do?"

"Nothing."

"Git pay for it?"

"Certainly."

"Is there much of it to do?"

"Twenty-four hours a day."

The tramp began to study up the proposition.

"Do I get a rest on Sunday?" he asked, after a moment's thought.

"It's seven days in the week," explained the citizen.

"Guess I don't want it." And his trampship moved off.—*Detroit Free Press*.



Portrait of a Lady

who has cleaned house all day without **Pearline**—and she's had a lively time of it. There's another day just like it coming to-morrow—and more afterwards.

Now, see the difference. With **Pearline**, all this hard work would be easy; through in half the time; nobody disturbed by it. **Pearline** cleans, without the least harm, everything that water doesn't hurt. You won't have your paint streaked and rubbed off or your marble discolored or your temper ruffled or—well, **Pearline** banishes more of the ills attending

house-cleaning than anything else known—just as good for washing clothes.

Send It Back Peddlers and some unscrupulous grocers will tell you "this is as good as" or "the same as **Pearline**." IT'S FALSE—**Pearline** is never peddled, and if your grocer sends you something in place of **Pearline**, be honest—send it back. 400 JAMES PVLE, New York.

Is your life insurance in safe hands?

There are degrees of safety. Are conditions such that what is safe now will continue safe? Much may be known on this point. If you know all about it, no need to inquire. It might be well to exchange conjecture for knowledge.

Do you get the worth of your money?

The same commodity brings different prices, depending upon the seller and the buyer. In the Penn Mutual you are both seller and buyer; you and your associates fix the price—of course it is the lowest.

Are you getting what you need?

There are many varieties of insurance; one for one thing, another for another. Is yours a complete adaptation? Expert advice, conscientiously given, is at your service. No obligation to insure; no importunity; we help ourselves by helping you.

What will your money buy?

Given the ability to save one hundred dollars per year, do you know exactly how much and what quality of life insurance should be yours? Somebody has told you; but was it "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth"?

Penn Mutual Life

Insurance Company,

921-3-5 Chestnut Street,
Philadelphia, Pa.

EVANESCENT AND ETERNAL HUMOR.—"Humor is a perception of facts in certain relationships." Relationships are eternally varying, human moods also vary, but some passages of humor are eternal, others are transient. Thus, it is said by some that Mr. Pickwick is scarcely so funny as he once was, but Falstaff has never ceased and can never cease to be entertaining. Mr. Pickwick is more temporary, local, and fantastic. So far the humor that created and enjoyed him was new humor. Falstaff is immortally human. So is George Dandin or Monsieur de Pourceaugnac. The humor which created them is not old or new, but eternal.

Out of his archæological reading Mr. Toole produces a story of a Greek statue of a god which was viewed as funny because one leg was too short. This the early pagan Greeks thought the highest humor. Mr. Toole decides that Dr. Ibsen's non-humor is not new, is "as old as sin." The vogue of Dr. Ibsen is only a caprice of the new culture, which is essentially uncultivated. It likes the grimy and the grubby. These it thinks are "real." It has no humor, and does not see the fun which arises from Dr. Ibsen's total lack of the quality.—*London Saturday Review.*

THE BEST MAN IS NO. 1.—There is something so honest and bold in the self-criticism of a man who appreciates his own virtues that it may well appall the soul unaccustomed to confidence.

A well-known general, in reviewing a corps of cavalry, suddenly stopped before a splendid-looking fellow, and asked, abruptly,—

"Which is the best horse in the regiment, my man?"

"No. 40, sir."

"What makes you think that he is the best horse?"

"He walks, trots, and gallops well, is a good leaper, has no vice, no blemish, carries his head well, is in his prime."

"And who is the best soldier in the regiment?"

"Tom Bodgers, sir."

"Why?"

"Because he is an honorable man, is obedient, tidy, takes good care of his equipment and his horse, and does his duty well."

"And who is the rider of the best horse?"

"Tom Bodgers, sir."

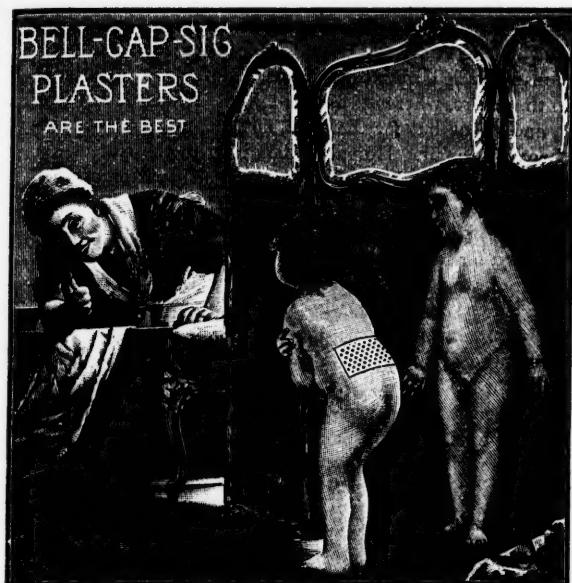
"And who is Tom Bodgers?"

"I am, sir."

The general could not help laughing, but he gave a sovereign to his informant.—*London Tit-Bits.*

FOOD FOR POWDER.—What is certain is that Napoleon gained sixty battles, ten more than Cæsar, and, to quote the figures preserved at the war office, he expended during the wars of the consulate and the empire one million seven hundred thousand men.

This man was visiting the battle-field of Magdeburg, and, struck by the number of dead which lay around some of his soldiers, said to Count Rapp, "What is the regiment that has fought so well?" and upon the reply, "The Thirty-Second," stopped, and said, meditatively, "How! does it still survive? I have killed so much of that regiment, in Italy, in Egypt, and everywhere, that there ought to be no more of it left."—*London Athenæum.*



Druggists Everywhere, or

CAUTION.

The genuine Bell-cap-sic have a picture of a bell on the back cloth—look for it.



J. M. GROSVENOR & CO.,
Boston, Mass.

NO FAMILY

should be without
Dr. Grosvenor's

**Bell-cap-sic
Plasters,**

a safeguard against congestions, inflammations, or oppressions of the lungs, pneumonia and pleurisy. These diseases should be treated without delay, lest they develop dangerous symptoms unexpectedly.

Bell-cap-sic Plasters

are quick in action and lasting in effect. Invaluable in treatment of rheumatisms, sprains, strains and all lamenesses. They cure by removing the cause.

FOR WOMEN,

Bell-cap-sic Plasters are invaluable; they rest the muscles, relieve tired, aching backs, and drive away pains peculiar to the sex.

MEN

find instant relief from pleurisy, lumbago and kidney pains.

TEN REASONS FOR USING

DOBBINS ELECTRIC SOAP.

THE REASON WHY

it is best from a sanitary point of view, is because of its absolute purity.

“ “ “ it is unscented, is because nothing is used in its manufacture that must be hidden or disguised.

“ “ “ it is cheapest to use, is because it is harder and dryer than ordinary soap, and does not waste away; also because it is not filled with rosin and clay as make-weights.

“ “ “ no boiling of clothes is needed, is because there is no adulteration in it—it being absolutely pure, can do its own work.

“ “ “ it leaves clothes washed with it whiter and sweeter than any other soap, is because it contains no adulteration to yellow them.

“ “ “ it washes flannels without shrinking, bringing them out soft, white, and fleecy, is because it is free from rosin, which hardens, yellows, and mats together all woollen fibres, making them harsh and coarse.

“ “ “ three bars of it will make a gallon of elegant white soft-soap if simply shaved up and thoroughly dissolved by boiling in a gallon of water, is that it contains pure and costly ingredients found in no other soap.

“ “ “ it won't injure the finest lace or the most delicate fabric, is that all these ingredients are harmless.

“ “ “ we paid \$50,000 for the formula twenty-five years ago, is that we knew there was no other soap like it.

“ “ “ so many millions of women use it, is that they have found it to be the best and most economical, and absolutely unchanging in quality,

ASK YOUR GROCER FOR IT. DOBBINS SOAP MFG. CO.
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

THE STORY-TELLER AND PUNCH IN EGYPT.—We stood for some time on the edge of a silent, many-circled, squatting cluster of dotted white turbans round a small space in the centre, where sat a story-teller. It was dark there but for the moonlight, and silent but for the loud, not unmusical cry of the entertainer and the echoes of the fair. He put his hand up to the side of his head (like the costermonger in Leech's drawing who yells "Sparrergrass!") and called his story, muezzin-fashion, fixing the stars with his eyes as the comedian plays at the boy at the back of the gallery. But what it was all about not even our dragoman could say, for it was told in some fellaheen dialect that he was much too genteel to know anything of.

So we passed to a ragged canvas shelter, where the children were patiently waiting for Punch and Judy. Even here the dragoman found acquaintances; he knew the boy who beat the drum on one side of the candle stuck on the ledge above the red shawl that hid the entertainer, and the evil-looking young man on the other who put the usual questions to Mr. Punch and upbraided him for his wrong-doing. It was veritable Punch and Judy, squeak and all, only that dog Toby was reinforced with a large, solemn hen, and that the minor parts in the brutal comedy were a sheikh, a Turk, and a Nubian woman who was Punch's sweetheart, not his wife. It was amazingly indecent, and the children looked like a group round a conjurer at a Christmas-party, the little ones in front and the big boys standing behind and hitting each other.—*The Cornhill Magazine*.

LOUDER THAN DYNAMITE.—"Did you advise Howler to cultivate his voice?"

"Yes."

"Oh, mercy! What for?"

"A rain-producing machine."—*Chicago Inter-Ocean*.

CHANGES IN THE DEAD SEA.—The curious statement is published in the organ of the Palestine Exploration Fund, on the authority of Dr. Lorter, that the Dead Sea loses every day by evaporation several million tons of water. Dr. Lorter says this enormous mass is easily drawn up by the rays of the sun, the valley wherein the sea lies being one of the hottest points on the globe.

This vast basin is remarkable as being the deepest depression upon the surface of the earth. It is thirteen hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean, and rocky walls, rising twenty-six hundred feet in height, surround it on all sides. It is nourished only by the river Jordan, and, there being no outlet, its entire tribute of water must be absorbed by evaporation only.

Dr. Lorter says that the waters of the lake are concentrating more and more, and so great has its density become that the human body floats on the surface without the slightest exertion of hands or feet.

BUTLER.—"There's a man below to see you, sir."

Mayberry.—"What did you tell him?"

Butler.—"I told him you told me if it was a lady, to say you were in; and if it was a man, to say you were out."

Mayberry.—"What did he say then?"

Butler.—"He said to tell you he was a lady."—*Harvard Lampoon*.

The Jackson Sanatorium,

DANVILLE, LIVINGSTON COUNTY, NEW YORK.



ESTABLISHED 1888.

Especial provision for rest and quiet, also for recreation, amusement, and regular out-door life.

Culinary Department under supervision of Mrs. Emma P. Ewing, Superintendent of the Chautauque Cooking School.

Hillside location in Woodland Park, overlooking extended views of the famous Genesee Valley region, unsurpassed for health and beauty. Charming walks and drives. Lakes, glens, and waterfalls in immediate vicinity. Clear, dry atmosphere, free from fogs and malaria. Pure spring water from rocky heights. Perfect drainage and sewerage.

Steam heat, open fires, electric bells, safety elevator, telegraph, telephone, etc.

For illustrated pamphlet, testimonials, and other information, address

Mention this Magazine. **J. ARTHUR JACKSON, Secretary, Danville, New York.**



A DELIGHTFUL home for those seeking health, rest, or recreation. Under the personal care of experienced physicians.

Elegant modern fire-proof main building and twelve cottages, complete in all appliances for health and comfort. Extensive apartments for treatment arranged for individual privacy. Skilled attendants. All forms of baths; Electricity, Massage, Swedish Movements, etc. Delsarte System of Physical Culture. Frequent Lectures, and Lessons on Health Topics.

Platt's Chlorides, **The Household Disinfectant.**

An odorless liquid. Powerful, Reliable, Prompt. Cheaper than Chloride of Lime or Carbolic Acid. Indorsed by 23,000 Physicians. Daily employed by hundreds of thousands of careful housekeepers.

In quart bottles only, at druggists' and high-class grocers'.

CAREFUL PREPARATION is essential to purity of foods. It is wisdom and economy to select those that are pure. The Gail Borden Eagle Brand Condensed Milk is prepared with the greatest care, and infants are assured the best. Grocers and druggists.

THE LATEST FAD IN WHIST.—All lovers of whist should know of the latest fad in this most scientific game of cards,—viz., Kalamazoo or Duplicate Whist. It has been the rage for the past two years in the Northwest, and is now rapidly coming East, and will soon do away with the plain game entirely. The object of this method is to prevent the possibility of chance becoming a factor in the game, as the cards are dealt and played once and put in the same order as played, and then the sides change hands and the same cards are played again, using from twelve to twenty packs of cards, opposing sides always changing hands, so that each pack is played twice although one dealing does for each pack. The sets of Duplicate Whist are manufactured by Ihling Bros. & Everard, of Kalamazoo, Michigan, who have issued a neat catalogue fully explaining the game.—*Uniontown News, Uniontown, Pa., Feb. 18, 1892.*

BIRDS THAT EXERCISE INGENUITY.—Birds building on high trees are not so wary about the concealment of their nests as hedge-builders and those that seek the springing corn or grass-land for the shelter of their homes, trusting to the loftiness of situation for security. A nest placed upon the ground is in constant danger of exposure. A browsing animal might destroy it. Then the scythe with one sweep occasionally lays bare one or more nests, thereby endangering the eggs or callow nestlings. This renders the parent birds very wary and causes them to practise great ingenuity in their efforts to protect the young birds.

The skylark has been known to carry its eggs or offspring to a place of safety after an exposure of the nest, and it has been said its long hind claw—the use of which has puzzled many naturalists—is specially adapted by nature for more easily grasping and transporting its treasures from the source of danger. When the young birds are too bulky to be thus removed, the parent bird carries them on its back, though this mode of removal is a somewhat difficult one.—*London Tit-Bits.*

SOME MOUSTACHE HISTORY.—What is the history of the moustache? In Greece and Rome no moustaches were worn without beards, but in the conquering days of the Roman empire several half-civilized races who had come partially under the influence of the Romans, and who wished to be rid of the name of *barbari*, or wearers of beards, attempted to shave, in imitation of their conquerors. But as they had very imperfect implements for the purpose, and as the upper lip is notoriously the hardest part of the face to shave in the case of any one poorly skilled in the art, they were unable to make a clean job of it, and left a quantity of hair on the upper lip.

This mark was characteristic of several nations on the confines of Roman civilization,—of the Gauls in particular, of the Dacians, and some others. See the Roman statue of "The Dying Gaul" in the Museum of Fine Arts,—perhaps the only classical representation of a moustache to be found in that institution. The Latin language has no word for moustache. This barbarous accident was unworthy of the honor of a Roman name.—*Boston Transcript.*

SEASONABLE SPECIALTY.—Stranger (to native).—"In what direction does the village lie, my friend?"

Native (slowly).—"Well, sir, in all directions, I reckon; though at this time of year it's mostly about fish."—*Truth.*

The Only Dust

that a good housekeeper is glad to have
around, is

GOLD DUST.

For cleaning and washing, nothing saves
her so much labor, time and money as

GOLD DUST WASHING POWDER

A 4 Pound Package
for 25 Cents at any
Grocers.



Made only by N. K. FAIRBANK & CO., Chicago,

St. Louis, New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Montreal.

PROVIDENT LIFE AND TRUST CO. of Philadelphia.

Safe Investments. Low Rate of Mortality. Low Expense Rate.

Unsurpassed in everything which makes Life Insurance reliable and
moderate in cost.

Has never in its entire history contested a death loss.

Carl L. Jensen's

CRYSTAL PEPSIN TABLETS are nature's only cure for dyspepsia and indigestion. They prevent dulness after eating, and induce a refreshed feeling of renewed energy. Delivered by mail to any post-office in the United States on receipt of fifty cents in stamps. Samples mailed free. Address the CARL L. JENSEN COMPANY, 400 N. Third Street, Philadelphia, Pa. For sale at all druggists'.

TURKEY'S FORMIDABLE GUNS.—In 1478 Mahomet II., in prosecuting the siege of Scutari, in Albania, employed fourteen heavy bombards, the lightest of which threw a stone shot of three hundred and seventy pounds' weight, two sent shots of five hundred pounds, one of seven hundred and fifty pounds, two of eight hundred and fifty pounds, one of twelve hundred pounds, five of fifteen hundred, and one of the enormous weight of sixteen hundred and forty pounds, enormous even in these days, for the only guns whose shots exceed the heaviest of these are our eighty-ton guns, throwing a seventeen-hundred-pound projectile, our hundred-ton, throwing one of two thousand pounds, and the hundred-and-ten-ton, throwing an eighteen-hundred-pound shot with a high velocity.

The stone shot of Mahomet's guns varied between twenty and thirty-two inches in diameter, about the height of a dining-table,—two thousand five hundred and thirty-four of them fired on this occasion weighing, according to a calculation of General Lefroy's, about one thousand tons,—and were cut out of the solid rock on the spot. Assuming twenty-four inches as the average diameter of the shot fired at the siege, the total area of the surface dressed was nearly thirty-two thousand square feet. At this siege the weight of the powder fired is estimated by General Lefroy to have been two hundred and fifty tons. At the siege of Rhodes, in 1480, Mahomet caused sixteen basilisks, or double cannon, to be cast on the spot, throwing balls two or three feet in diameter.—*Chambers's Journal*.

ALICE.—“Oh, dear! it is so awfully hot. I know I look just like a boiled lobster, don't I?”

Mabel.—“Yes.”

Alice.—“You horrid, mean old thing!”—*Minneapolis Journal*.

A VIEW OF THE POET WORDSWORTH.—I cannot forbear quoting an amusing incident lately told me by an old friend (a grand-niece of Mrs. Wordsworth), who, when a child in her parents' home at Durham, remembers one afternoon an announcement being made to her mother that a man wished to speak to her, and that as he appeared very tired and seemed to have walked a long distance he had been accommodated with a seat in the kitchen. My friend's mother, like most country residents, was not unaccustomed to interviewing people of all sorts and conditions, and, having finished the letter upon which she was engaged, proceeded leisurely to the kitchen, expecting perhaps some application for employment or possibly to hear a tale of sickness or distress among her humbler neighbors. Her dismay may be imagined when, seated hat in hand upon a windsor chair and absently contemplating the weights of the Dutch clock upon the opposite wall, she discovered the poet-laureate.

My informant, who was scarcely of an age to appreciate the beauty of the poet's conversation, confesses to an industrious though fruitless attempt on her part to count the number of buttons missing from the distinguished visitor's gaiters on this interesting occasion.—*Cornhill Magazine*.

LITTLE JOHNNIE.—“You ought to have seen Gus de Smith and sister make lemonade.”

Mrs. Brown.—“How did they do it?”

Little Johnnie.—“Sister Birdie held the lemon, while Gus squeezed Birdie.”—*Texas Siftings*.



IMPERIAL HAIR REGENERATOR INSTANTLY RESTORES GRAY HAIR, BLEACHED HAIR OR GRAY BEARDS TO NATURAL COLOR. LEAVES IT CLEAN, SOFT AND GLOSSY, AND NO ONE DREAMS THAT YOU COLOR IT. ABSOLUTELY HARMLESS, ODORLESS AND LASTING. BATHS DO NOT AFFECT IT. SEND SAMPLE OF HAIR AND DESIGNATE ITS NATURAL COLOR.

HAIR COLORING

No. 1, Black.	No. 3, Medium Brown.	No. 6, Gold Blonde.
No. 2, Dark Brown.	No. 4, Chestnut.	No. 7, Ash Blonde.
	No. 5, Light Chestnut.	

TRADE MARK
 PRICE \$1.00 OR \$3.00
 PAMPHLET FREE.
 TRY OUR IMPERIAL HAIR WASH, 50 CENTS
 Mention this Publication. **IMPERIAL CHEMICAL MFG. CO., 292 Fifth Avenue, New York.**

CONSUMPTION CURED.—An old physician, retired from practice, had placed in his hands by an East India missionary the formula of a simple vegetable remedy for the speedy and permanent cure of Consumption, Bronchitis, Catarrh, Asthma, and all Throat and Lung Affections, also a positive and radical cure for Nervous Debility and all Nervous Complaints. Having tested its wonderful curative powers in thousands of cases, and desiring to relieve human suffering, I will send free of charge, to all who wish it, this recipe, in German, French, or English, with full directions for preparing and using. Sent by mail, by addressing, with stamp, naming this paper, W. A. Noyes, 820 Powers' Block, Rochester, N.Y.

IMPERIAL GRANUM is easily prepared, and is as efficacious for adults as for infants.—*The Christian Leader, Boston, Mass.*

For invalids, convalescents, and the aged, for nursing mothers, infants, and children, **IMPERIAL GRANUM** is a most reliable food preparation.—*The Examiner, New York.*

THE C. H. & D. R. R. have issued a handsome panoramic view, five feet long, of Chicago and the World's Fair, showing relative heights of the principal buildings, etc., also a handsome photographic album of the World's Fair buildings, either of which will be sent to any address, postpaid, on receipt of ten cents in stamps. Address **D. G. EDWARDS**, General Passenger Agent World's Fair Route, 200 West Fourth Street, Cincinnati, Ohio.

THEY BOUGHT THE NOVEL.—An amusing paragraph which has been going the rounds of the press states that the publishers of a German novel recently did a neat thing in the way of advertising. They caused to be inserted in most of the newspapers a notice to the effect that a certain nobleman of wealth and high position, desirous of finding a wife, wanted one who resembled the heroine in the novel named. Thereupon every marriageable woman who saw the notice bought the book in order to see what the heroine was like, and the work had an immense sale.—*Printer's Ink.*

EARNINGS OF FRENCH AUTHORS.—Many of the French authors, as is well known, have earned large incomes from the products of their pens. So numerous, indeed, are the stories of success that the days when Corneille received only five hundred francs for his "Athalie" seem even farther back than they are.

"It is a familiar fact," says *Die Wiener Mode*, in an article upon the wealth of writers, "that Alexandre Dumas the elder received immense sums from his theatrical pieces and novels, and that his works still assure a good income to his son. It was the first production of 'Henri III.' which changed the fortunes of that writer. On the day before the production he was a subordinate official in the service of the Duke of Orleans, and content with his annual salary of twelve hundred francs. On the following morning, however, he was the lion of the time. He sold his manuscript for six thousand francs. Dumas the elder would have died a millionaire many times over had it not been for his tendency to waste money. The younger Dumas has earned, without doubt, much less money than his father, although he had the advantage of making his debut with a famous name. The first hundred productions of 'The Lady with the Camellias' brought him 'only' twenty thousand francs. But from that time on his income increased rapidly. For instance, the clever writer received sixty thousand francs for the right of translating 'Francillon' before it was presented to the theatre-goers a single time.

"Victor Hugo," adds the journal, "left five millions of francs, not including the value of his works. The works produce an annual income of fifty thousand francs for his heirs. Victorien Sardou owns a princely palace in Marly-le-Roi, and has a princely fortune to support it. The beautiful home of Zola, in Medun, as is well known, has cost the owner millions of francs already, and requires an immense income to keep it up. The countrymen of Medun, by the way, get as much from Zola as possible. A pound of peas, for instance, can be purchased for thirty sous, but Zola pays often as high as three francs for it.

"But all these large incomes are exceeded by that of Georges Ohnet. His 'Forge-Master' has been a gold-mine for him. In 1885 it was estimated that the revenue from the novel and drama bearing that name was more than five hundred thousand francs. Thus it may be seen that the calling of the dramatic author in Paris pays well, and that, in general, to speak with Rossini, 'they do not die from hunger.'"—*New York Tribune.*

THE FLIGHT OF TIME.—Governess.—"How long is it since Rome was founded?"

Little Fanny.—"Rome was founded two thousand six hundred and forty-eight years ago."

Aged Grandmother.—"Dear me! how time does slip away!"—*Texas Siftings.*

